

Pigeon Creek Baptist Church  
Indiana

DRAWER

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CHURCHES

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# Abraham Lincoln and Religion

Pigeon Creek Baptist Church  
Indiana

Excerpts from newspapers and other  
sources

From the files of the  
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection



Rockport Journal Jan 12 1919

The office letter appears in the Kansas City

two journals of Jan 22 1919 John Beach of Kansas City has sent his sister Mrs. Mat Wilson in the city a copy of that issue and it is through her kindness that we reproduce the letter of Rev. Oberstheim.

"I have knowledge of an incident which I have never seen in print. In the year 1864 while a teacher in Rockport attending at Rockport in the southern part of Indiana I was invited by the Methodist presiding elder the Rev. J. S. Shullard of the Rockport District, Indiana to assist and assist him in conducting a quarterly conference meeting to be held in forty odd Indian. This meeting was near where Mr. Lincoln's mother lies buried. We visited the grave of Mr. Lincoln's mother and were taken to the cabin where the Lincoln family had lived. We then visited an old log church standing probably a quarter of a mile distant from either the cabin or the grave an old log Baptist church not then in use, but when my guide told me the Lincoln family had formerly worshipped.

While in the old church I climbed up into the loft to familiarize myself with the building and discovered by a crevice between two logs of the upper logs an old faded memorandum book that had been used in the years spanning it and scanning its contents I found the entry when the church was changed 211 To 1 Brown

" 1/2 doz tallies made

and signed

"I am it was an interesting discovery but I do not know the value of that little entry. I am sure it was a very important one. So after making it carefully I placed the book back in the crevice where I found it.

File signed by



then - you see it again to, or the fact in front  
that her father was the sexton in an old log church.  
I have thought the world should know it.

May it not be that what he ministered at the  
altar in that old church and before the men of God  
that occupied the pulpit of that primitive  
sanctuary. Obedience must come from some of the  
unfathomable laws and some of the principles  
that we manifest in his remarkable life  
in other years.

Calder A. Obersthaus.

Post Memorial Boff Church

Davey Okla. Jan 18 1907

In the same record of Post-Memorial  
is a picture of old Beyer's House

Feb 18, 1907

Love prayer J. L. used

Fit and prepare us for  
humble service we beg for  
Christ's sake Amen.

John Hanks Stur Feb 11 1923





# LINCOLN WAS REARED AS HARDSHELL BAPTIST.

## *Entries Found In Deerskin-Bound Records of the Baptist Licking-Locust Association of Regular Baptist Churches In Kentucky Prove His Father Was a Pillar of the Church*

LINCOLN CITY, Ind., Oct. 31.—Rolling back the mists of a century and offering the deerskin-bound records of Little Pigeon Baptist church, near here, as the missing link of Abraham Lincoln's religion, Thomas B. McGregor, assistant attorney general of Kentucky, has given to an appreciative American substantial evidence that Abraham Lincoln was reared in the simple faith of the "hardshell" Baptist church.

Much of the mystery of Lincoln's religion and that of his parents, for more than half a century a mooted question, has been evaporated by the findings of Mr. McGregor in the records of Little Pigeon church.

There is no record of Abraham Lincoln's affiliation with any church denomination, but Mr. McGregor's story of Thomas Lincoln, moderator and pillar of the little Baptist church, proves conclusively, Mr. McGregor says, that the Lincoln family were Baptists.

### **Gave Corn to Church.**

"Thomas Lincoln was not in such poor circumstances but that he always donated to the needs of his church," said Mr. McGregor in offering the following copy of an agreement to build a new chimney on the meeting house:

"We the undersigned Do agree one with another to pay the Several Sums next our names in produce this fall to be Delivered Retwixt the first & 20 of December, the produce, as follows, Corn, wheat, whiskey, soft Linnen wool or any other article a material to do the work with, the produce will be Delivered at Wm. Barkers in good mercantile produce."

Signed with other names is:

"Thomas Lincoln, white corn, manufactured—pounds—24."

"Thus," continued Mr. McGregor, "we have revealed to us the religion of Abraham Lincoln's parents, his sister, Sarah, and of himself. He was raised in the simple hardshelled faith, which in after years never left him.

"We have no record of Thomas Lincoln or his wife ever uniting with any church after they moved to Illinois in 1830."

### **Well to Do In His Day.**

"The parents of Abraham Lincoln deserve a fairer estimate than has been allotted them by most of the biographers of Lincoln," said Mr. McGregor, "and the story, as told by the records that are still to be found in the archives of Little Pigeon church, near Lincoln City, Spender county, Indiana, of the devotion paid by the parents of Lincoln to him who guided the lad of Pigeon Creek in the hour of the nation's travail, goes far to give to them their true estimate. In fact, they were well to do pioneers of their day, of sturdy ancestral stock, owned a farm, domestic animals, tools, and a family Bible, neighborly, sacrificing, and active church going members.

"Pigeon Creek church was founded on June 8, 1816, the year that Thomas Lincoln and his family moved from Kentucky and settled on Little Pigeon creek, in what was then Warrick county, Indiana territory. It was then, as now, the chief church in that vicinity.

When the meeting house was built its site was selected about a mile west of Thomas Lincoln's home, the church building today occupying practically the same place. When Lincoln's mother died she was buried between their home and the church, the graveyard not having been at that time started at the church, but when Lincoln's sister, Sarah Crisby, died, in 1828, she was buried at the church burying ground, where her grave is yet to be seen, marked by a rough stone.

"This church, with its continuous existence since 1816, has only two books containing its records and minutes; the first covering the period from 1816 to 1840. It is in this book that we find Abraham Lincoln's

father, stepmother and sister were active members of the hard-shell Baptist church of Pigeon Creek, and this book, with its deerskin cover, the hair still remaining, not only reveals in its crude historic way the true religion of Lincoln's parents, but gives us the best insight yet found to his own religious views.

### **Parents Married by Methodist.**

"Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks were married by a Methodist minister by the name of Jesse Head, but shortly afterward they were united with one of the churches of the Baptist Licking-Locust association of Regular Baptist churches in Kentucky, and when Nancy Lincoln died in Indiana, Abraham, by his own efforts, had their Kentucky pastor, Elder David Elkins, come to their wilderness home and preach at his mother's funeral.

"After Thomas Lincoln had married Sally Rush Johnson he sent back to his Kentucky church and obtained his letter of fellowship, and, as the minutes on June 1, 1823, show, he united with the Pigeon Creek church by this letter and his wife by experience. From that date until they moved to Illinois in 1830 their names appear frequently in the minutes of the church proceedings. Thomas being one of the pillars of the church, acting as moderator, on committees to investigate the conduct of brethren and sisters, and messenger to associations, bearing the letter of Pigeon Creek to her sister churches.

"The historic minute which records the affiliation of Thomas Lincoln and his wife with this little pioneer church follows:

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"7th Received Brother John Wire by Relation and Sister Linkhon and Thomas Carter by Experience."

## LINCOLN'S RELIGION

Because of the conflicting statements recently printed on the subject, the Rev. W. J. Puckett of Cave City, Ky., inquires of The Courier-Journal what was Abraham Lincoln's religious belief—of what church, if any, was Lincoln a member. A few days ago, says Mr. Puckett, was published the statement that Lincoln was "a Presbyterian." Recently, he adds, he saw "a list of Presidents" wherein Lincoln was set out as "a Unitarian."

Commenting on these reports, Mr. Puckett says:

I was pastor at Lincoln's birthplace, Hodgenville, Ky., for nine years. I am sure that the aged people of that vicinity were under the impression that Lincoln was a Baptist in religious belief, but probably was not a member of any church. It is undeniable that his father and mother were Baptists. Since the subject is up for discussion, will not someone, who may have unquestioned evidence regarding it, please state whether Abraham Lincoln was a Baptist, a Presbyterian, a Unitarian or member of any other church or of no church. It is high time that doubt respecting this interesting question was set at rest.

Research concerning the point raised by Mr. Puckett's inquiry fails to make sure that Lincoln was what is known as "a church member." There is no record available to prove that Lincoln was ever "baptized." The death of Lincoln's own mother when her son was a boy deprived him of an influence that often prompts the young to become church members. Though his father was married a second time, and to an excellent woman, "religious conventions" were not rigorously observed in the Lincoln household. Pastors were few. Invitations to join the church were less insistent than later they became.

Lincoln, alone in the world and confronted by life-conditions that obtain near the frontier, grew up in an atmosphere, if not of religious indifference certainly of ecclesiastical neglect. He was required to chart his own voyage. Companioned with the Bible, he did so. Of the Old Testament and the New he drank deep. To him each was a well of living water to which he seldom failed to repair for strength and refreshment.

Of all men of his generation, Abraham Lincoln was least beset with the spirit of "sectarianism"—employing the word in its larger sense. As in politics he was above all party and all section, loving his whole country and all its people, so in religion he was distinctly and magnificently "catholic," employing the word "catholic" in its generic sense. If his political vision foretold freedom for all his countrymen, his religious spirit cherished the hope that the time might come when there should be neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, for all should be made one in human love and divine law.

Emerson's words—"God is like the ocean which is called by different names as it washes different shores"—seem to hint the broad religious tolerance of Abraham Lincoln. Abraham Lincoln's whole life seems to enforce the point made by Thomas Jefferson: "I never told my own religion, nor scrutinized that of another. I never attempted to make a convert nor wished to change another's creed. I have ever judged of the religion of others by their lives . . . for it is in our lives, and not from our words, that our religion must be read."

With Abraham Lincoln, Jew, Catholic and Protestant alike, in America at least, may justly claim spiritual kinship. With him also Buddhist and Shintolst and Zoroasterist may keenly sympathize. With none of these had he quarrel or controversy. Unlike the little boys at play on the seashore at night, one of whom said, "Here is the pathway to the moon," only to hear his companion cry out, "No; here is the pathway of to the moon." Abraham Lincoln's great soul divined that each was correct, that the only difference between the two lads was one of view point.

That Lincoln was not a nominal church member neither adds to nor detracts from either his goodness or his greatness. When judged by his life his religion surely was a good one.

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# Hoosier Church Record Shows Lincoln "Hardshelled" Baptist

## Little Pigeon Congregation Near Lincoln City Dominated by Father of War President After 1816, Kentucky Attorney Finds.

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Much of the mystery of Lincoln's religion, and that of his parents, for over a half-century a moot question, has been evaporated by the findings of Mr. McGregor in the little old deerskin book of Little Pigeon Church.

### Family Were Baptists.

There is no record of Abraham Lincoln's affiliation with any church denomination, but Mr. McGregor's story of Thomas Lincoln, moderator and pillar of the little Baptist church, proves conclusively, Mr. McGregor says, that the Lincoln family were Baptists.

"The parents of Abraham Lincoln deserve a fairer estimate than has been allotted them by most of the biographers of Lincoln," said Mr. McGregor, "and the story, as told by the records that are still to be found in the archives of Little Pigeon Church, near Lincoln City, Spencer county, Indiana, of the devotion paid by the parents of Lincoln to him who guided the lad of Pigeon creek in the hour of the nation's travail, goes far to give to them their true estimate. In fact, they were well-to-do pioneers of their day; of sturdy ancestral stock, owned a farm, domestic animals, tools and a family Bible; neighborly, sacrificing and active church-going members.

"Pigeon Creek Church was founded June 8, 1816, the year that Thomas Lincoln and his family moved from Kentucky and settled on Little Pigeon creek in what was then Warrick county, Indiana Territory. It was then, as now, the chief church in that vicinity. When the meeting house was built, its site was selected about a mile west of Thomas Lincoln's home, the church building today occupying practically the same place. When Lincoln's mother died, she was buried between their home and the church, the graveyard not having been at that time started at the church, but when Lincoln's sister, Sarah Grigsby, died in 1828, she was buried at the church burying ground, where her grave is yet to be seen, marked by a rough stone.

### Covers 24 Years.

"This church, with its continuous existence since 1816, has only two books containing its records and minutes; the first covering the period from 1816 to 1840. It is in this book that we find Abraham Lincoln's father, step-mother and sister were active members of the hardshell Baptist church of Pigeon creek, and this book, with its deer-skin cover, the hair still remaining, not only reveals in its crude historic way the true religion of Lincoln's parents, but gives us the best insight yet found to his own religious views.

"Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks were married by a Methodist minister by the name of Jesse Head, but shortly afterward they were united with one of the churches of the Baptist Licking-Locust Association of Regular Baptist Churches in Kentucky, and when Nancy

Lincoln died in Indiana, Abraham, by his own efforts, had their Kentucky pastor, Elder David Elkins, come to their wilderness home and preach his mother's funeral.

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### Minutes of Meeting.

"The historic minute which records the affiliation of Thomas Lincoln and his wife with this little pioneer church follows:

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"Thomas Lincoln was not in such poor circumstances but that he always donated to the needs of his church," said Mr. McGregor in offering the following copy of an agreement to build a new chimney on the meeting house:

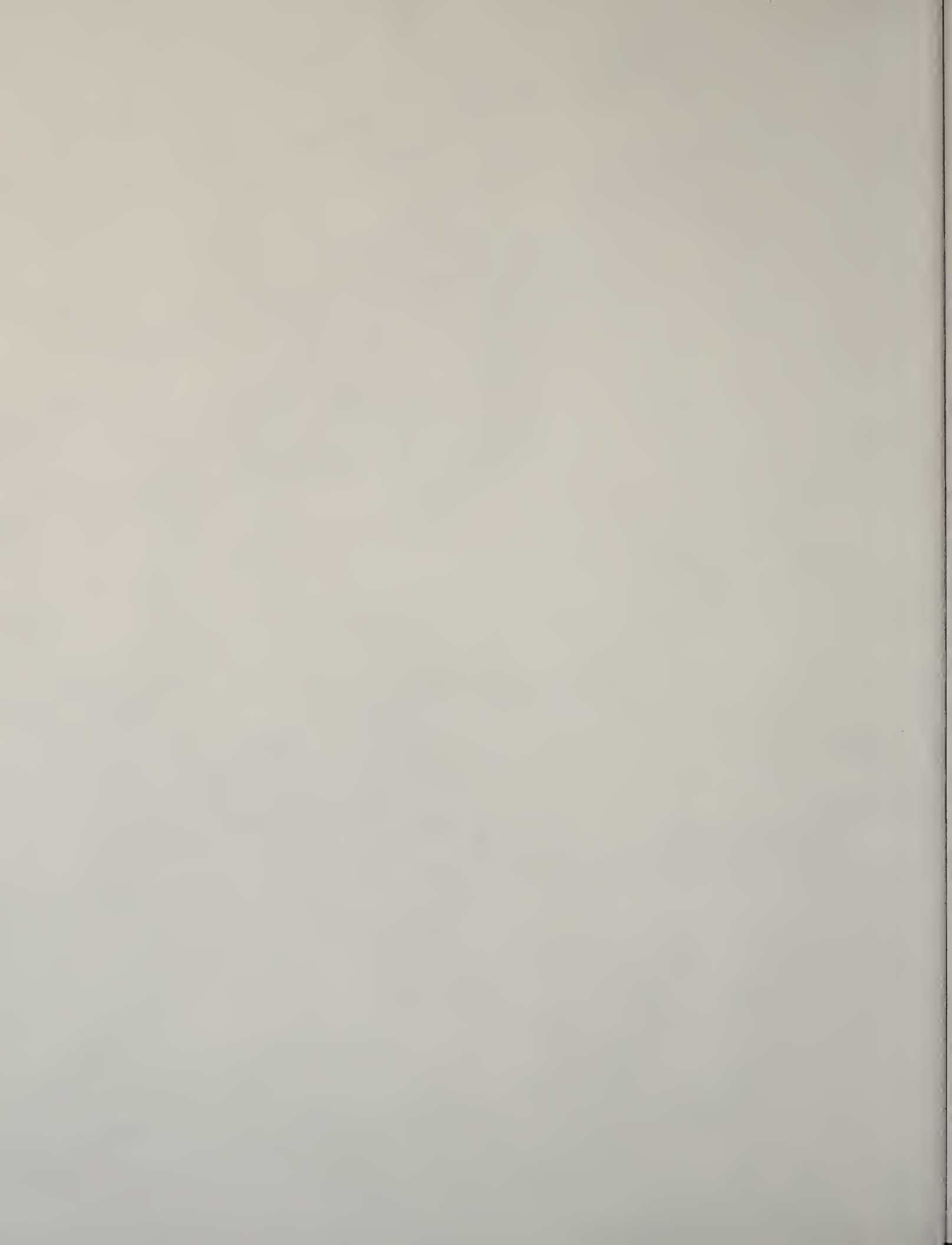
"We the undersigned Do agree one with another to pay the Several Sums next our names in produce this fall to be Delivered Betwixt the first & 20 of December, the produce, as follows, Corn, wheat, whisky, soft Linnen wool or any other article a material to do the work with, the produce will be Delivered at Win. Barkers in good mercantile produce."

Signed with other names is:

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"Thus," continued Mr. McGregor, "we have revealed to us the religion of Abraham Lincoln's parents, his sister Sarah and of himself. He was reared in the simple hardshelled faith, which in after years never left him.

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# LINCOLN'S RELIGIOUS LEARNING SHOWN IN CHURCH RECORDS

Mists of Century Rolled Back and Deerskin Records Introduced to Prove Emancipator Reared in Simple Faith of The 'Hard Shelled' Baptists.

(Associated Press)

LINCOLN CITY, Ind., Nov. 12.—Rolling back the mists of a century, and offering the deerskin-bound records of Little Pigeon Baptist church near here as the missing link of Abraham Lincoln's religion, Thomas B. McGregor, assistant attorney general of the state of Kentucky, has given an appreciative America substantial evidence that Abraham Lincoln was reared in the simple faith of the "hard-shelled Baptist church. Much of the mystery of Lincoln's religion, and that of his parents, for more than a half century a moot question, has been evaporated by the findings of Mr. McGregor in the little old deerskin book of Little Pigeon church.

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## MOVED FROM KENTUCKY

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## UNITED WITH CHURCH

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THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 1922.

W. H. Sawin has received a copy of the Lena, Ill., Weekly Eagle containing an article on the early religious training of Abraham Lincoln. The article was written by J. G. Sawin, an uncle of W. H. Sawin, and declares the Great Emancipator was reared in the "Hardshell" Baptist faith. His father and mother, says the article, were married by a Methodist minister, but after the death of Abraham Lincoln's mother, whose name before her marriage was Nancy Hanks, his father and his second wife became members of the Baptist church. Lincoln's life, says the writer, shows many evidences of his early training in the church.

Lincoln by letter and \* \* \*

"7th Received Brother John Wire by Relation and Sister Linkhon and Thomas Carter by Experience."

## ALWAYS AIDED CHURCH

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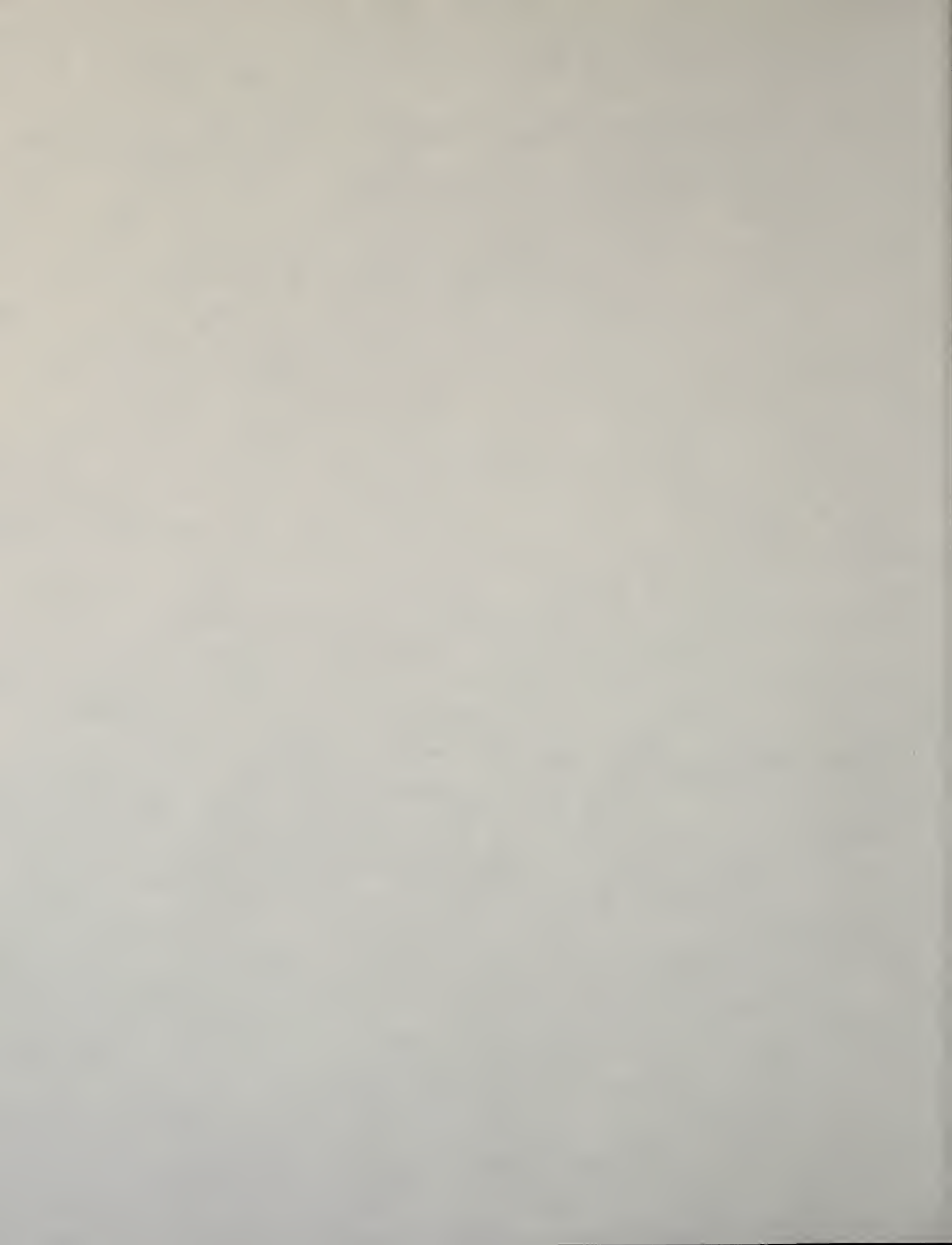
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# Church in Which Was Sowed the Seed Of Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation Still Used in Worship

By HOWARD MURRAY

GRANDVIEW, June 27.—(Special)

—Nearly four miles from Lincoln City, the burial place of Nancy Hanks Lincoln, mother of the immortal Lincoln, sits Little Pigeon Baptist church, an obscure frame building resting on a green hill in the shade of trees centuries old.

This church, although rebuilt in 1872 to replace the original church erected almost 50 years earlier, still holds the traditions of one of the most critical periods in American history. Proximity often leads to undervaluation of things and this is brought out in the fact that although the church stands under the very eyes of Pocket historians, it has not been granted the place in history that it merits.

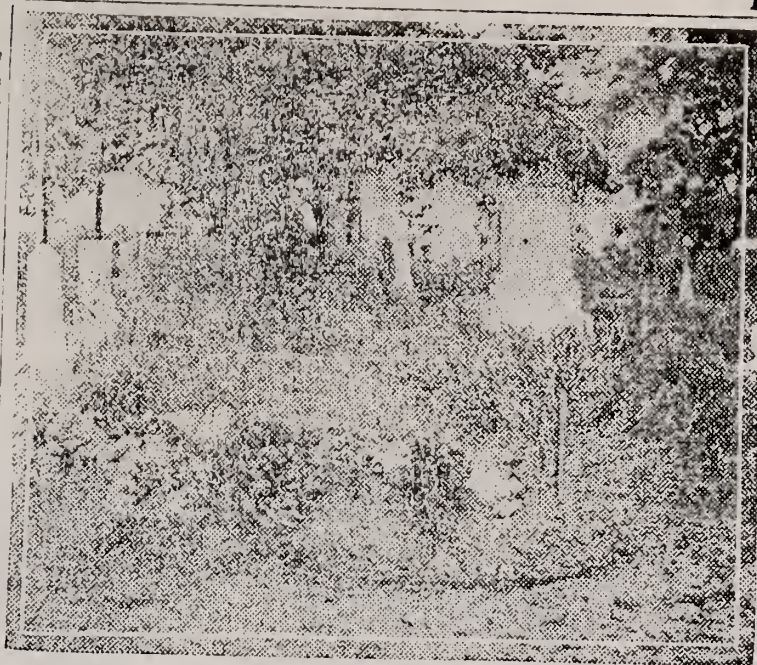
Here the little, rural congregation of decades ago came to worship, to wed, to christen, and to bury their dead. In the quiet little cemetery, holding, in hearts long turned to pathetic dust, stories of the life of the pioneers, there is much of interest to the historians, the romanticist, the dreamer. Here lie the founders of the church and the unassuming makers of history.

The 109th anniversary of the founding of the church observed recently, June 8, to be exact, has brought to light the fact that much influence was wielded within its walls that led to the downfall of the bondage of the black race in America.

The seed of abolition, the hatred of slavery, preached in the simple language of an obscure rural pastor, within the walls of the church fell on fertile ground in the mind of an awkward, gangling youth. This seed, growing with the growth of that youth into manhood, became a conviction strong enough to shake to the foundations the mightiest nation on earth. When the conflict of others had ended, out of the chaos brought by a sincere man's convictions came the striking away of the yoke of a subdued and downtrodden race.

On June 8, 1816, John Weldon and James Downs, pioneer citizens of the county, founded the church. Its original congregation consisted of 13 men. As one atlas says: "Six and seven females." The original chose Samuel Bristow as pastor.

One in the vicinity of Lincoln has any knowledge of the names of the congregation. However, others of this number several have been preserved. Among them: Mr. and Mrs. William Barker, Mr. and Mrs. William Barker, Mrs. Henry Gunterman, Mr. Reuben Grigsby, Mr. and Mrs. Gordon, Mr. and Mrs. Howell, Mr. and Mrs. Robert, and Mrs. Jacob Oskins, Mr. and Mrs. James Gentry, Mr. and



Mrs. Thomas Lincoln, Mr. and Mrs. O. R. Griffith, Jesse Oskins, and the Rev. John Richardson. These names are still familiar in Spencer county today.

Soon after interest in religious activities was aroused an effort was put forth to build a church to house the congregation and met with ready response. A mile south of Lincoln City on the farm of Noah Gordon and on that of Samuel Howell, the building was erected. Gordon and Howell contributed the ground upon which it was built. Thomas Lincoln, the father of the future president, assisted by the boy Abraham, did the carpenter work.

Upon the completion of the building, it is said, Abraham Lincoln came into contact with church life for the first time. The following excerpt is taken from a Spencer county atlas of 1879:

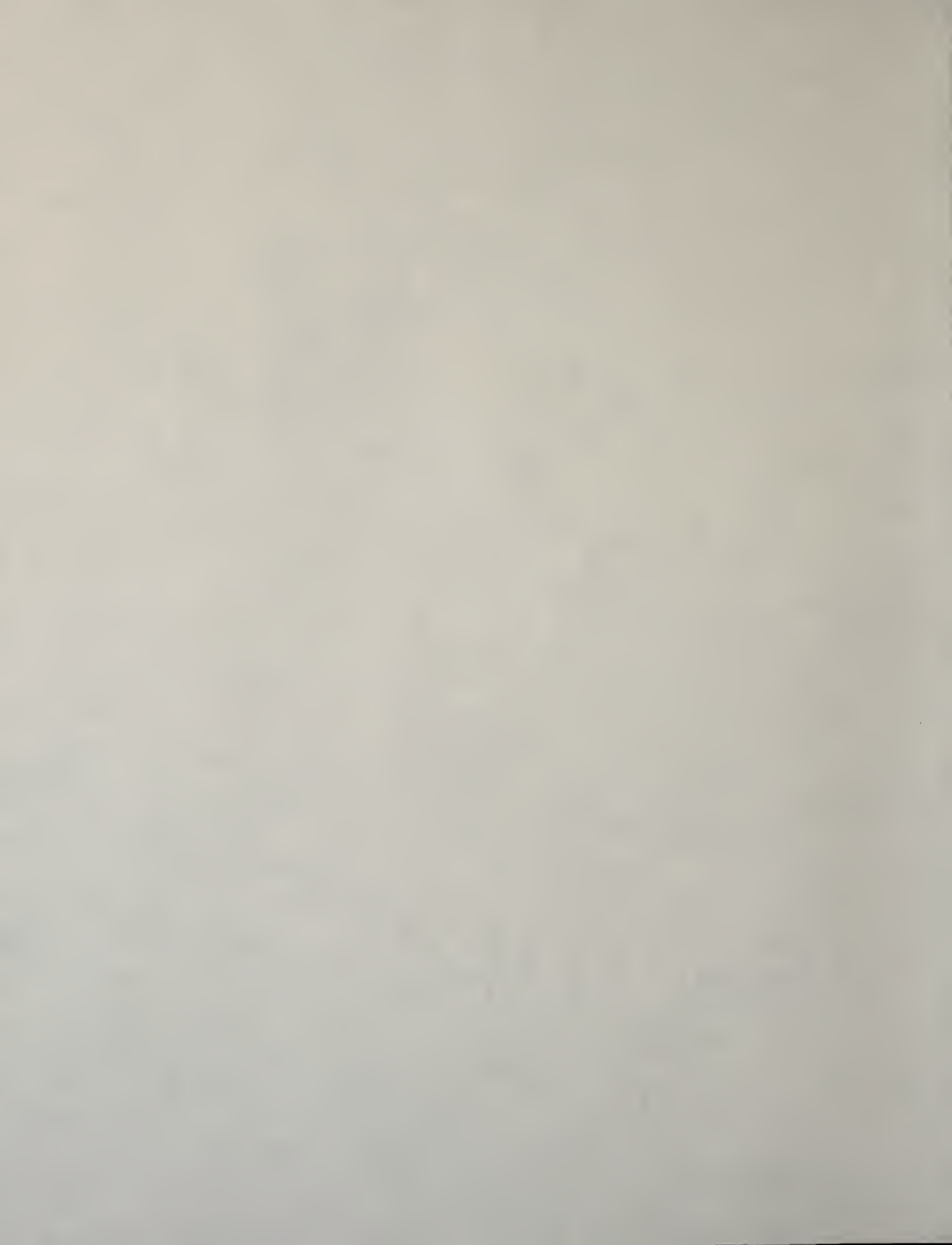
"Adam Shoemaker was the third pastor to father the little flock and here the immortal Lincoln received his first lessons in democracy and abolition."

Perhaps the old preacher realized that the future held much in store for the gangly, awkward, backwoods boy. "It is said that a great many of his sermons held the theme that it was sinful to hold human beings as property. Here became inculcated in the nascent mind of the growing Lincoln the conviction that a great wrong was being done the black race.

And here, under Shoemaker's guidance was conceived and nurtured the seed that later bore fruit in the abolition of slavery in the United States.

The church, with its burden of tradition, still stands. It is now used by what is known as the Little Pigeon congregation.

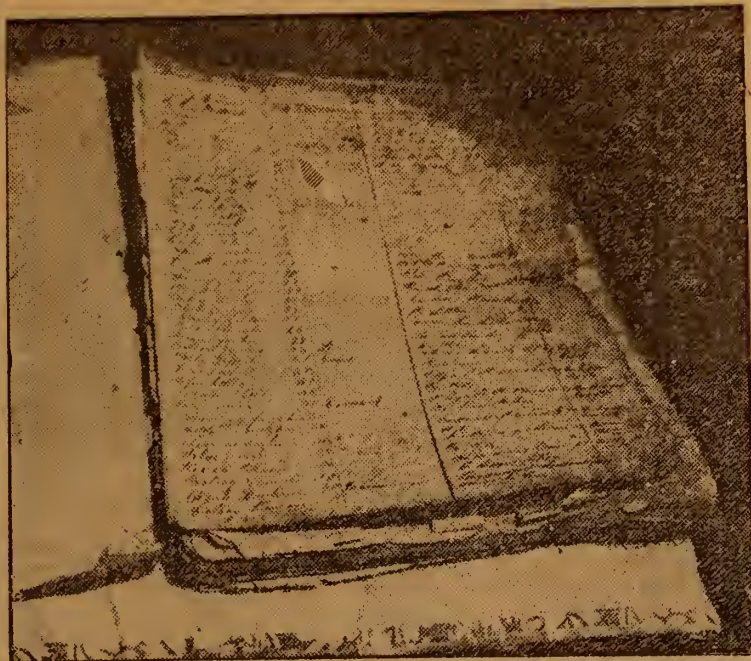
*Evening news 6-28-25*





I am sending you this clipping from last Sunday's issue. Last, for fear you might have missed it in the rush and confusion of everything.  
3, 1930. J. F. Wilson. Shelbyville, Ind.

## OLD LINCOLN CHURCH RECORD WILL NOT BE SOLD TO FORD



Above—Church record of the Little Pigeon Church, bearing the name of Abraham Lincoln's father. The name, misspelled Linkhorn, is eighth from the bottom.

Below—Exterior view of the Little Pigeon Church.

[Special to The Indianapolis Star.]  
EVANSVILLE, Ind., Aug. 2.—Members of the Little Pigeon Church, of primitive Baptist faith, which was organized in Spencer county in 1816 and of which church Thomas Lincoln and his daughter Sarah were listed as early members, will not be forced to sell the old ledger which contains the records and the minutes of the church from its organization down through some thirty years.

They were preparing to make the sacrifice and to offer the old book, bound in deerskin from which the hair has practically all been worn, to Henry Ford for his museum, in order to obtain funds to build a short stretch of road leading from the main highway to their church building so that they might be able to get to their place of worship. The road as it stands becomes impassable during winter weather and the members are unable to get to church services.

### Press Club Aids Church.

However, officers of the Boonville Press Club have assured church leaders that that organization will get behind a movement to finance the road and prevent the sacrifice of the old ledger which they feel should remain in the section which created it.

It has been suggested by George Honig, Evansville sculptor and historian, that the contents of the old ledger, the pages of which are of parchment and well preserved, be printed in book form and sold, the funds to be used towards financing the road building project.

The ledger, with its record of church proceedings, contains much history as yet unpublished. It records dismissal of many early members of the church of more than one hundred years ago. Some were dismissed by letter as they took up their abode elsewhere; some died and their names were crossed out and the date of their death recorded after the name and still others, in every case men, were excommunicated. The one word stands alone. There is never an explanation as to what deed or deeds led up to the churching of the unfortunate member, though the minutes of the meeting may have gone into these details.

It has further been suggested by Mr. Honig that such of the logs as still remain from the original building, this having been torn down when the present frame structure was erected, and the logs used to build a stable, be used in the reconstruction of the old log church. Within this church he proposes that a scene of worship be portrayed, using stone or wax figures to represent the pioneer preacher and his congregation. He would make of this a mecca

for tourists who will some day come to Lincoln City to see the \$1,000,000 memorial which is to be erected there. Some small charge might be made or a free-will offering taken here to apply to the expense of road building.

### Other Means Suggested.

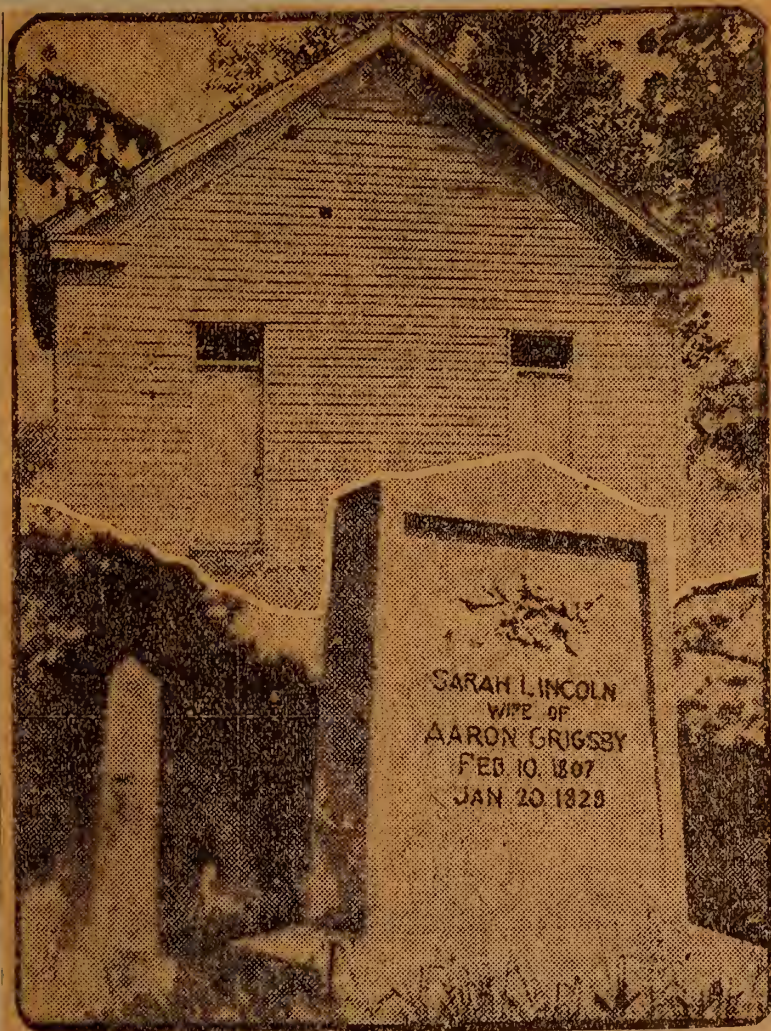
Or, if these plans prove too slow of maturity, W. B. Carlton, editor and publisher of the Boonville Enquirer, declares that it is certain that the Pocket Publishers' League would put on a fund-raising campaign and pave the road to the church, saving the old ledger.

The old book, which is now in the custody of Lewis Varner, Boonville groceryman, though age-yellowed, is quite legible, but difficult to read because of the difference in lettering of that day.

Its pages are filled with names of men and women who figured prominently in early history of this section of Indiana and of Kentucky.





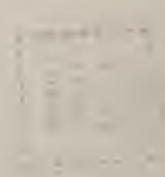


Old Pigeon Baptist church (above) which Abe Lincoln assisted in building and the monument erected to his sister, buried in the churchyard.





POST CARD







# FOOT CARD

EXHIBITION

Card





15. 10. 1904

10. 10. 1904

10. 10. 1904

10. 10. 1904





PAID

POST OFFICE

POST OFFICE

Payee's Name



# Rev. Samuel Bristow, Morgan County Pioneer, Preached To Lincolns

Interesting both as an incident in the pioneer history of Morgan county and in its relation to the growing mass of Lincolniana is the identification of Rev. Samuel Bristow, pioneer Baptist preacher in Morgan county, as the same Samuel Bristow who was the first regular preacher at the Lincoln family church in Indiana, the Pigeon Church on Pigeon Creek in Spencer County.

In 1816, a group of thirteen settlers along Pigeon Creek, including Samuel Bristow and Lavina, his wife, organized the Pigeon church with Bristow as clerk. They were Separate

Baptists, emancipationists and rather Calvinistic. In November or December, 1816, Thomas Lincoln brought his wife, Nancy Hanks, and his children, Sarah and Abraham, to Pigeon Creek. The Kentucky churches with which the Lincolns had affiliated were Separate Baptist and emancipationist, although the Lincolns were married by a Methodist preacher. The Kentucky churches in the Lincoln country were torn by the slavery controversy. There were many slaves in the region and also emancipationists and abolitionists. Neither Thomas Lincoln nor his father, Abraham, ever owned a slave although both held title to much land. Nancy Hanks Lincoln died in October, 1818 and in December of the next year Thomas went back to Kentucky, married Sarah Bush Johnston, a widow with several children, and brought her and her brood to his Indiana home, much to its betterment. The Pigeon congregation built a meeting house in 1819. Thomas Lincoln, a carpenter of sorts, and as we now know a good natured, inoffensive, law-abiding, and notably honest man, improvident but in a plodding way industrious and hard working, assisted in its construction. He did not remove his membership from a Kentucky church until 1823. Just why he delayed so long in moving his membership to the Pigeon church whose doctrines were satisfactory to him is not clear. The Lincoln family remained on Pigeon Creek until 1830 when it came to Illinois. Just prior to leaving Indiana the Pigeon church granted a "letter of dismissal" to Lincoln and his wife, but after the letter was granted he was appointed on a church committee to settle a quarrel between two of the sisters. His reputation was so good that he was selected to serve on church committees and as peace officer, and road supervisor.

## Lincoln Worshipped Speakers

Abraham Lincoln was about eight years old when he was brought to Indiana and he remained there about thirteen years. As a small lad, even he was a hero worshipper as to public speakers. Apparently he determined while quite young to make a public speaker of himself and he made youthful efforts at public speaking.

The preachers at Pigeon church were those he listened to in his formative years. Bristow was one of the earliest he heard and must have influenced his impressionable mind.

Samuel Bristow was the first regular preacher at Pigeon church. On June 14, 1821, he performed the marriage ceremony of Dennis F. Hanks and Elizabeth Johnston, a step sister of Abraham Lincoln, in the home of Thomas Lincoln. A census of 1821 shows that Bristow, his wife, four boys and three girls, were residents of Spencer county, Indiana. After that he disappeared from Indiana history.

## Headed Colony Here

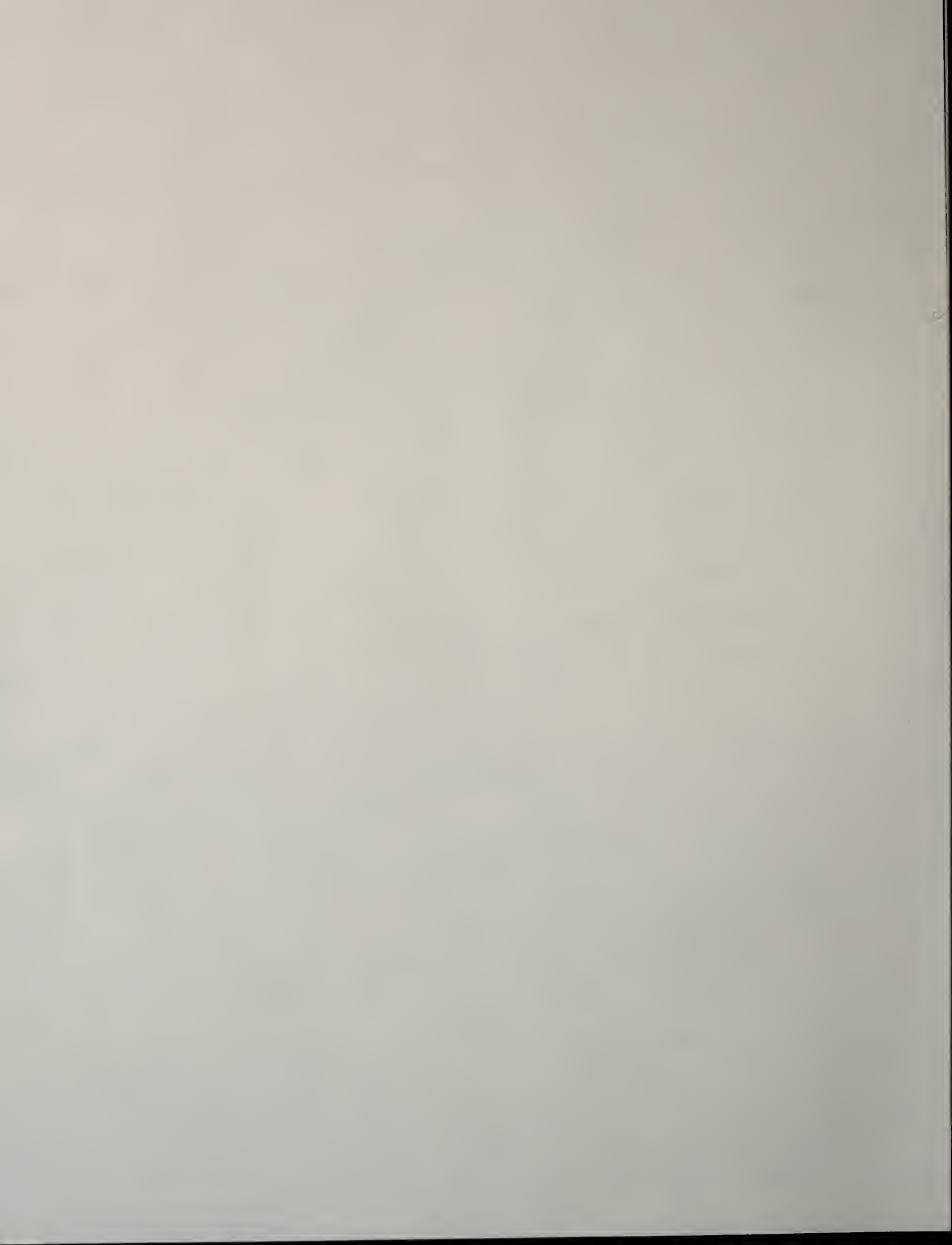
Samuel Bristow brought a colony consisting of his own and the Reid, Box, Curlock and Bosher families to the region just north of the present Jacksonville in 1821 or 1822. Bristow acquired the eighty acre tract now owned by Charles S. Black, the one crossed by the new hard road, and two other tracts east of it now owned by Lauries. The Reids located farther west.

Bristow organized his colony into a church which appears to have been the first religious organization in what later became Morgan county. His church continued some years but finally disbanded. He appears to have been the first preacher to hold services in the community. His colony was undoubtedly made up of Kentuckians and some or all of them may have lived for a time along Pigeon Creek in Indiana as early writings refer to the colony as Indianians.

## A Prominent Pioneer

Bristow was rather prominent in the pioneer history of Morgan county. He was one of the commissioners named to fix a temporary seat of justice when the county was organized, in 1823, and was one of the county's first justices of the peace. He brought his emancipationist principles with him and in 1823 or 1824 was a member of an anti-slavery society of Morgan county. He and his wife, who signed deeds as Lavincy and Laviny, remained in the county for a decade or more and then removed to Carroll County, Arkansas.

An increasingly great interest is being shown in any thing connected with the name of Abraham Lincoln. New books are coming regularly. The Lincoln Association of Springfield, Ill., the Lincoln Historical Research Foundation of Fort Wayne, Ind., of which Dr. Louis A. Warren is director and many individuals are constantly uncovering hidden Lincolniana. Dr. Warren, author of Lincoln's Parentage and Childhood, etc., and who has spoken in Jacksonville several times, edits Lincoln Lore. In a recent issue he referred to Samuel Bristow, the preacher at Pigeon Creek, Ind. A local citizen recalled the Morgan county pioneer of the same name. Research quickly disclosed that the Pigeon Creek preacher and Morgan county pioneer were one and the same man.



The Spencer County Historical Society of Indiana, Rockport Improvement Association, Chamber of Commerce, City Council and Kiwanis Club invite you to an old-fashioned pioneer celebration on July 4th, 1935, in the Rockport City Park at Rockport, county seat of Spencer County Indiana.

The day's festivities open at 10:00 a. m. of that day with a pioneer parade through the city streets to the park.

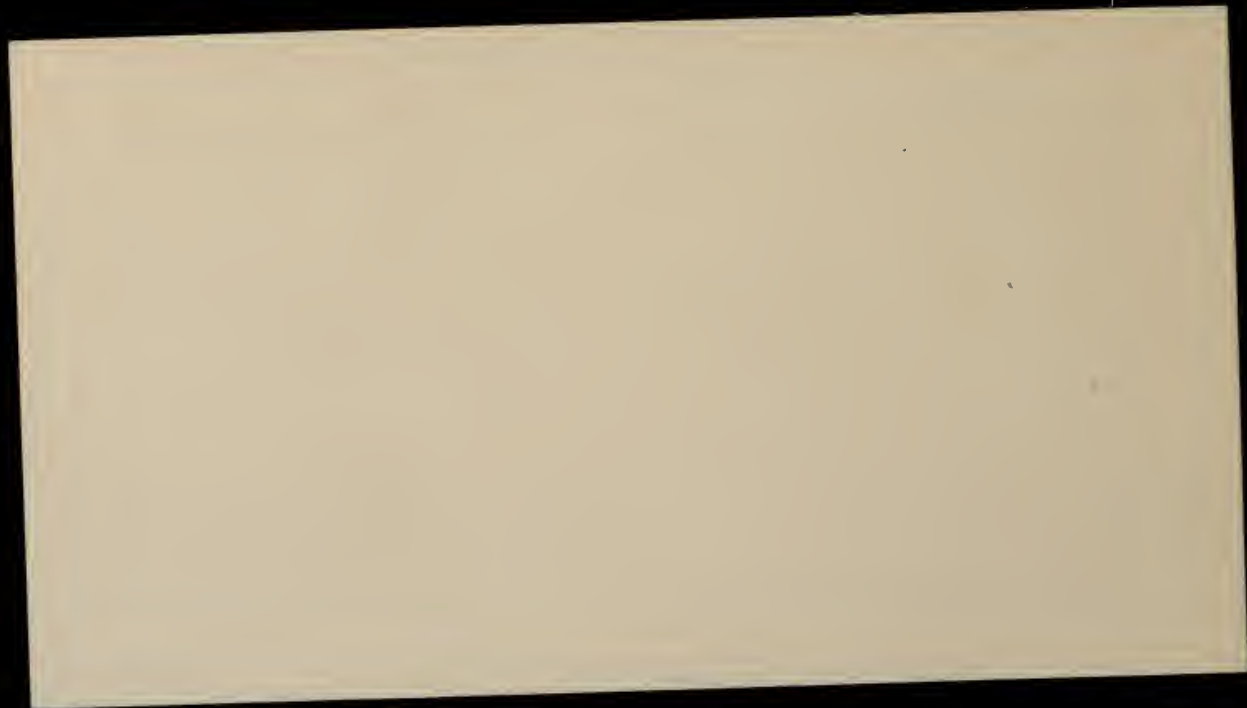
In the park are tables and benches for picnic parties, good drinking water and free parking for automobiles.

For those who wish it there is to be served an old-fashioned pioneer dinner in the park for 50c a plate. There is no admission charge to enter the park.

At 1:00 p. m. the McGuffey Club is to have a program in the "Lincoln Pioneer Village" and at 2:30 p. m., in the park, there is to be a program of music and speeches by noted people and the dedication of the "Lincoln Pioneer Village," a memorial to Spencer county pioneers and to Abraham Lincoln, whose boyhood days were lived in Spencer county from the age of seven to twenty-one.

Come, join with us in living a day out of the past and at the close of the afternoon see an Indian raid on the Pioneer Village.

A Reception Committee is to be stationed just outside the "Lincoln Pioneer Village" in the park to make you welcome. The Committee hopes to meet you there.





# ABRAHAM LINCOLN AT PIGEON CREEK

A Drawing by Frederick Polley.

7 2 7 1872





In the fall of 1816 Thomas Lincoln, with his wife Nancy, his daughter Sarah and young son Abraham came to Indiana. After a short visit at Troy, on the Ohio river near the mouth of Anderson creek where Abe later on was to run a ferry boat, the little family made their way to the site of their future home on Little Pigeon creek, cutting a passage through the tangled wilderness in what was then known as Hurricane township, Perry county, Indiana. Perry county was the fourth county organized in the year 1814, and was the last county to be created before the Territory of Indiana applied to Congress for an enabling act. Troy was the first county seat. Spencer county was organized in 1818, and its boundaries included the settlement of Little Pigeon Creek where the Lincoln lived. The Lincoln family entered the Indiana country in the autumn season when our Southern hills are dressed in their gayest colors. These returning fall pageants of bewitching hues was annually witnessed by the boy Abraham from the tender age of 7 until his twenty-first year. These are the years of memory-storing. Abe Lincoln never forgot. It was not long after the arrival of the Lincolns at the Perry county settlement until the Pigeon Baptist church was organized and Thomas Lincoln became a member on June 7, 1823. He was soon made a trustee and often

served as a moderator. He was a skilled carpenter and when the church was built he fashioned the door and window frames and made the pulpit. Young Abe assisted in this work. This building was, no doubt, made of logs and stood about a mile south of the Lincoln home. The drawing above was made last summer from the cemetery yard and shows the little frame church erected on the site of the old log building. Sarah Grigsby, the sister of Abraham, is buried in this small cemetery and the citizens of Spencer county have erected an appropriate monument on her grave.

In this Indiana settlement Abe Lincoln began his career as a man. The little open-front log cabin, their first Hoosier home, was constructed by the father and son. At the age of 7 Abe knew how to wield an ax. And at this age, too, he began actively to assist in the support of the family. Here in southern Indiana he became a rail splitter, an activity which became an important asset in his campaign for the presidency. The first two years of Abe's life in Indiana were no doubt his happiest, for they were the years of a loving mother's guidance. A sentiment, frequently quoted, came from his lips while he was in the White House, contains this genuine confession, "All that I am or hope to be, I owe to my angel mother."





# MILEAGE FROM DALE, INDIANA

To	Route	Miles
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## N O R T H

Huntingburg, Ind.	231	9
Jasper, Ind.	231	16
Loogootee, Ind.	231	37
Indianapolis, Ind.	231, 50, 37	137
Fort Wayne, Ind	231, 50, 37	252
Chicago, Ill.	231	300
Detroit, Mich.	231, 50, 37, 24	414

## E A S T

Santa Claus, Ind.	460, 245	5
Corydon, Ind.	460	59
Louisville, Ky.	460	83
Hodgensville, Ky.	Start 460	122
Cincinnati, Ohio	460, 42	191
Washington, D.C.	460, 42, 50	693
Boston, Mass.	Start 460	1068

## S O U T H

Lincoln Homestead	231, 345	3
Rockport, Ind	231	22
Owensboro, Ky.	231	36
Bowling Green, Ky	231	112
Nashville, Tenn.	231, 31W	169
New Orleans, La.	Start 231	715
Miami, Fla.	231, 90, 100, 1	1193

## W E S T

Lynnville, Ind.	68	19
Evansville, Ind.	68, 57, 41	42
New Harmony, Ind.	68	59
Carmi, Ill.	68, 460	83
St. Louis, Mo.	68, 460	210
Denver, Colo.	460, 40	1094
San Franc'co	460, 40, 24, 40	2818

(Over)



From 35 State Conventions came 70 carefully selected delegates



As to occupation, highest number are teachers; 28 are in college; age 22 claims more than any other year. They had a good time during free moments, but settled into serious mood at "attention"



## PHOTO-TALE OF THE MONTH

Helmsman at Franklin (and at Denison two years ago) was Louis Lucas, Washington, D.C., who has worked on idea of B.Y.F. from the start



TRIBBLE STUDIO, FRANKLIN

Daily devotions of First National Council of the Baptist Youth Fellowship were led by the Rev. W. D. Rae, pastor of First Baptist Church, Bloomington, Ind., closing with communion

# YOUNG PEOPLE



Volume LXII

PHILADELPHIA, FEBRUARY 8, 1942

Number 6

## Pigeon Creek Church



PAUL'S PHOTO  
This painting, now in Baltimore, portrays President Lincoln upon his arrival in Washington to take up his duties as head of the nation. Over his right arm he carries the famous shawl, a distinguishing feature of his costume

## He Made Lincoln Laugh

WITH A FUND OF YANKEE QUIPS AND SAWS "JOSH" BILLINGS HELPED TO LIGHTEN THE DARKER HOURS OF THE GREAT WAR PRESIDENT

By James Aldredge

INTEREST in Abraham Lincoln and all he said and did was never keener than it is today. Nevertheless, by some quirk of fate possibly, all the humorists whose writings helped to relieve the great War President's most anxious hours seem to have been forgotten. "Artemus Ward," "Petroleum V. Nasby," "Orpheus K. Kerr," and "Q. K. Philander Doesticks"—every one of these with their odd pen names has fallen into a neglect that approaches oblivion.

One of the most picturesque members of the group was "Josh Billings" (Henry Wheeler Shaw), a true Berkshire Yankee, born on April 21, 1818, at Lanesboro, Mass. His father was a well-known lawyer who served for years as a state senator, a Congressman and the New England manager of Henry Clay's ill-starred presidential campaigns.

When the boy was old enough, he went to Hamilton College in Clinton, New York, but he never graduated. It was a long, roundabout journey on those days, and one of these trips young Shaw fell in with a group that had just re-

turned from the Western frontier. Their accounts of their adventures and the strange sights they had seen fired the youth's imagination, and after that college became too dull a place for him.

With ten dollars his father had given him, the young man set out upon a wandering life through the West that lasted for over ten years. Once he was traveling with two other youthful adventurers when their combined funds stood almost at the vanishing point. Shaw proposed that they put on a show at one of the local "opera houses." The others caught eagerly at the idea, and in the part of "Mordred David," young Shaw gave a lecture on mesmerism that brought down the house and helped to restore their finances for a short time.

But this was only a makeshift. The Yankee traveler had to do various things—farming, running a coal mine, piloting an Ohio River steamboat, auctioneering and selling real estate. The West must have lost its charm after a while, for 1858 Shaw returned East and settled (Please turn to page 45)

IN the year 1816, on June 8 to be exact, the Pigeon Creek Baptist Church was constituted in the community where Abraham Lincoln grew to manhood. Inasmuch as the church exerted a major influence in all community life in pioneer days, this institution, with the possible exception of the log-cabin school, possibly contributed as much to the intellectual, the religious and the social development of Lincoln as any other organized group with which he came in contact.

It is evident from the title page of the old Pigeon Church record-book which is still extant that this particular group was associated with what was known as the Regular Baptists. This excerpt is taken from the title page: "Book for the purpose of recording the business of the Church of Christ constituted by the Regular Baptists at Pigeon Creek signed by William Stark." The note of the organization follows: "Saturday, June 8, 1816, the Baptist Church of Jesus Christ, known by the name of Pigeon Church, Warren County, Indiana territory, was constituted by Brother John Weldon and Thomas Downs, presbytery, called for that purpose, whose names, numbers, and articles of faith and government are as follows: First, the Church chooses Sam-

uel Bristow, Moderator, and Thomas Downs, Clerk for the meeting." There were fifteen charter members of the Pigeon Church.

Like many other early religious organizations, the meetings of this group were held in the homes of the people and it was not until March 13, 1819, that some definite action was taken with respect to the building of a house of worship and the selecting of a site for such a building.

There was apparently a difference of opinion as to where the church should be built, as might be expected, and any decision was postponed until there was more of a "Oneness of mind concerning the seat." In July of the same year a committee of five was appointed to view three different places which had been suggested for the church site, or as it was called in the record-book, the church seat.

On December 11, 1819, the church confirmed the original recommendation that the meeting house be built at Brother Gordon's. At the January meeting the committee on the building site made a report with reference to the acquisition of the land, and on February 12, 1820, Abraham Lincoln's eleventh birthday, by (Please turn to page 45)



MARTHA E. MORRIS  
One of the most recent statues to be erected to Abraham Lincoln is found in Hingham, Mass., where his first American ancestors lived. In 1637 Samuel Lincoln (his great-great-great-grandfather) left his native town of Hingham, England, and joined his two brothers who had helped to found this New England town; they named it after their home in Old England. The Old Ship Church, where Samuel and his family worshipped, still stands, and in the churchyard one finds many Lincoln graves



## He Made Lincoln Laugh

(Concluded from page 41)

down as an auctioneer and real-estate operator in Poughkeepsie, New York.

Here his literary career began under a curious circumstance. He tried writing funny articles for the local papers, but at first they attracted no attention whatever. But when the versatile auctioneer patterned after "Artemus Ward" and resorted to the crude, broad, and undisciplined rustic, a startling success followed. People read his paragraphs and were convulsed by the combination of phonetic orthography and Yankee wit. New Yorkers in other cities copied them, and "Josh Billings" found he had a following.

Soon he began looking for a publisher. "Artemus Ward" came to his rescue and helped to launch the volume that became a favorite with readers—*Josh Billings' Book and Sayings*. Then *The New York Weekly* invited "Josh" to write a regular column, and he kept it up for the next twenty years at a salary of \$100 a week.

His faithful public included Abraham Lincoln in the White House. The President might be harassed by worries, but his love of humor never failed. One day, after the Cabinet had been kept waiting to the point of the President's anger, the President stalled in, carrying a paper. Suddenly he sat down and began to read from it.

But it was no weighty editorial on the Administration's latest move or the conduct of the war. The President wanted to share "Josh Billings'" latest column—his "Essay on the Mule." As Mr. Lincoln's voice rambled along, Stanton's expression grew more and more outraged. The grim War Secretary looked as though he would quit the room in disgust.

Cabinet officers were not often invited to listen to something as trivial as the following: "The kark kark any yester nor further than the boss, yet their cars are big enuff for snow shoes. The only way to keep them into a paster, is to turn them into a mucker jining and let them jump out. . . . Tha are the strongest creatures on earth, and heaviest, according to size; I herd tell of one wuz wuz the tow path, on the Erie Kanawl, and sunk as soon as he touched bottom, but he kept right on towing the boat to the nex sashon, breaking thru the bars which stuck out of the water about 2 feet, 6 inches. . . ."

The first ventures of "Josh Billings" into the lecture field were disappointing. Cities and towns had been booked all the way to Milwaukee, but there came a night when the lecturer found himself facing a single gentleman in a hall meant for five hundred.

"Would the audience like to go around the corner and have some fried oysters and catsup?" "Josh" inquired gently.

The "audience" was quite willing and the man passed a pleasant evening, though minus a lecture.

At the end of the tour there was exactly enough money left to take the lecturer and his agent back to Poughkeepsie. "Josh" was terribly cast down.

But he hadn't heard of the day would come when Major Pond could make it known that all sizable towns within 500 miles of New York had heard "Josh" famous lectures on "Milk."

This discourse, like all his others, was a rambling affair, given over to quips and observations about every subject known to man. At a certain point "Josh" would pause to ask if anybody wanted to ask any questions.

Thereseon some unsuspecting member of the audience usually wuz quiescent why he had not confided himself to his subject—milk. That gave "Josh" just the lead he wanted.

Gravely he would answer: "My good friend, I drank a quart of milk before I mounted this platform. Ever since I have been lecturing on milk!"

"Josh" made a small fortune out of his *Former's Alimnax*. Once, on a lecture tour, he was laid up with sickness in a

Maine farmhouse where all he could find to read was an old-fashioned farmer's almanac. That gave him the idea for a take-off. The manuscript was ready in a week's time, but it was lucky for "Josh" that his publisher preferred a royalty basis instead of buying it outright for \$250. Ninety thousand *Alimnax* were sold inside of three months, and successive editions in the next ten years brought "Josh" over \$30,000.

During his last years in New York, "Josh" had everything to make life comfortable. Sometimes he was seen in Central Park riding with his wife in their elegant carriage. But more often the townspeople could point him out on Broadway, where he liked to stroll with his dog "Milk," pausing perhaps to pass the time of day with the famous Mr. Bryant. The humorist had become quite a figure about the city.

But in the fall of 1885 he was missing. His health had been failing, and the doctor advised the milder climate of California. It was a vain journey. A stroke of apoplexy took its swift toll on October 14 at Monterey. Ten days later "Josh" Billings was laid to rest among his native Berkshire hills, while the nation jinged in tribute.

The droll side to Yankee humor still survives in his forged works. Some of the like the following make the present neglect seem altogether undeserved:

"It is better to know less than to know so much that ain't so."

"If you are handsum, cultivate your boots; if you are homely, hoe your brains."

"An angleworm, though filled with grit, is not quarrelsome."

"The hornet is an inflammable buzzer, sudden in his imphensions and hasty in his conclusions or cnd."

story and 6 feet above the joists." The committee was authorized to employ workmen to perform the said work.

By June 12, 1823, the meeting house was in need of repair and three trustees were appointed to attend to the business: Reuben Grigsby, William Barker, and Thomas Lincoln. It was not until June 7, 1823, that Thomas Lincoln was received into the church by letter. On December 10 of that year three members of the church were appointed to "lay off the building ground of the Pigeon Meeting House." In July, 1827, the church decided to have a brick chimney on the church and that William Barker make the brick.

It is very likely that Thomas Lincoln hesitated to affiliate with the Pigeon Church because it was of a different faith than the church to which he had belonged in Kentucky. Nevertheless, the Regular or later United Baptist Church, as the Pigeon group called themselves, received Thomas Lincoln's letter from the Kentucky Church, which we have reason to believe was the Little Mount Separate Baptist Church.

On the same day that Thomas Lincoln was baptized by letter Sister Lincoln and Thomas Carter were received by experience. On April 8, 1826, the church records state: "Door opened for reception of members" and the fourth entry bears this inscription: "Received Sister Sally Lincoln by experience of grace." This was undoubtedly Abraham Lincoln's sister, as a church record list shows the name of Sally Lincoln as a member of the church, and then the name Lincoln crossed out and the name Grigsby written above the name indicating that it was this Sally Lincoln that married Aaron Grigsby. On the same list there also appears the name of Thomas Lincoln and Sally Lincoln, his wife.

she married Aaron Grigsby. Although it is apparent that Lincoln had plenty of opportunities to marry when he was in Spencer County, if the folklore of the people can be relied upon, the fact that he did not marry is probably responsible more than any other one thing for his non-affiliation with the church.

Thomas Lincoln was a father, became a very prominent member of the Pigeon Church. He was one of its trustees, he was appointed to interview members of the church who had not observed the church discipline, he served as moderator at some of its meetings, and subscribed to funds necessary for repairing and improving the church building.

Just at the close of his residence in Indiana there seemed to be some disagreement between the Grigsbys and the Lincolns, which apparently first found expression at the time of the death of Sarah Lincoln Grigsby. The difficulty between the families was satisfactorily adjusted, however. On February 13 we find the last entry of Thomas Lincoln's name in the church record-book when he was appointed on a committee of five, including H. Gentry, R. Odgers, D. Turnham, and J. Oskins to decide a matter of church discipline. This, it may be observed, was just a few days before the Lincoln family returned to Illinois, showing that up to the very last of the Lincoln residence in Indiana Thomas was an active and influential member of the church.

From "Lincoln Lore," Louis A. Warren, Editor, Published by the Lincoln National Life Foundation.

## BIG BEN

(Continued from page 42)

when Professor Dick had brought him here, the Friday evening gale, the night when he had sung and Louie had leaned against the counter holding a glass only half-wiped. . . .

In the morning the news from the hospital was cheering. Louie, the doctors had decided, was too weak for the transfusion. Instead, he had been given glucose to speed up his heart beat and if he rallied during the next few hours they would attempt the transfusion. Ben, who had pictured the transfusion completed and Louie already on the way to a quick recovery, nodded.

All through the day his nerves were wound tight, like the mainspring on a watch. He washed dishes, ran errands for the cook, peeled potatoes. Once, wanting a change, he asked Jed if he could relieve at the cash register.

"You do your work and I'll do mine," Jed retorted irritably.

"Maybe you think you're too good to peel potatoes," Ben snapped.

"Think again," Ben said, "catch hold of yourself. You didn't sleep a wink last night and neither did we. Let's forget about it. We're not the important part of this."

Shamefaced, Ben said, "I'm sorry, Jed," and turned back toward the kitchen.

The idea, Ben guessed, came to him when he learned that they would have to wait until morning for definite word of Louie's condition. Or it may have been the crazy saying still going through his mind that gave him the notion. Suddenly he was desperately homesick—for the springtime smell of Prince Street, for Amos Jackson's steady hand on his wrist as he bowed in prayer, for the rustle of Aunt Gerry's voluminous petticoats and the lazy comfort of Uncle Eb's presence in the room. He wasn't going to spend the night in the next room, tossing sleeplessly, wondering about Louie. To-night when they closed the Luncheonette he would catch the late bus to Chillicothe.

PRINCE STREET was dark and quiet.

Ben quickened his stride, remembering every crack in the crooked flagstone on which he was treading. Then he turned the gate to his own home, climbing the porch (Please turn to page 47)



It was a common practice in England to choose a sweetheart or special friend for the ensuing year, on St. Valentine's Day, and the lady in the case of course expected a gift.—SAMUEL PHELPS, *Diary*, 14 Feb, 1660

## PIGEON CREEK CHURCH

(Concluded from page 41)

the way, the first plans for the church building were accepted.

However, it was not until September 9, of the same year, that the church decided to change the plans of the building. On March 10, 1821, a committee of five was appointed with final authority to agree upon a plan as to the form and the size of the meeting house. It was decided the meeting house would be "30 by 26 feet, hewed logs, 8 feet in the under

One may wonder why Abraham Lincoln did not affiliate with the Church at this time, but it would have been strange if he had joined, and the supposition is that he would not have been invited to join. There were practically no young people on the book of the Pigeon Creek Church. It was a list of adults, and the membership was too serious an affair to be publicly embraced by those who could not settle down in life. The marriage register of Spencer County, and the old church record-book, clearly indicated that matrimony was almost a requisite for church membership. Less than four months after Sarah Lincoln, Abraham's first, affiliated with the Pigeon Church

YOUNG PEOPLE



Genial host to Baptist youth was Franklin College, Franklin, Ind.

To the Main Building for conferences and worship, then to dining hall for lunch

# Fellowship at Franklin

December 27-30, 1941

Subcommittees worked out details of new Baptist Youth Fellowship of the Northern Baptist Convention and drafted constitution. Here Annajean Richards of Michigan leads discussion



TRIBBLE STUDIO

PHOTOGRAPHS BY  
STANLEY A. GILLET

YOUTH IN FOCUS

Committee of the whole met in Webster Hall, third floor of this building



# LINCOLN LORE

Bulletin of the Lincoln National Life Foundation - - - - Dr. Louis A. Warren, Editor  
Published each week by The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Number 661

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

December 8, 1941

## PIGEON CREEK CHURCH

In placing special emphasis upon the 125th Anniversary of Indiana's Statehood which occurs on December 11, of this week, and in calling special attention to another anniversary, the coming of the Lincolns to Indiana about the same time the State came into the Union, one is apt to overlook still a third anniversary which is of special significance in attempting to study the religious background of Abraham Lincoln.

It was 125 years ago in the year 1816 on June 8, to be exact, that the Pigeon Creek Baptist Church was constituted in the community where Abraham Lincoln grew to manhood. Inasmuch as the church exerted a major influence in all community life in pioneer days, this institution, with the possible exception of the log cabin school, possibly contributed as much to the intellectual, religious and social development of Lincoln as any other organized group with which he came in contact.

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Like many other early religious organizations, the meetings of this group were held in the homes of the people and it was not until March 13, 1819, that some definite action was taken with respect to the building of a house of worship and the selecting of a site for such a building. There was apparently a difference of opinion as to where the church should be built, as might be expected, and any decision was postponed until there was more of a "Oneness of mind concerning the seat." In July of the same

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It is very likely that Thomas Lincoln's hesitancy to affiliate with the Pigeon Church, was because it was of a different faith than the church to which he had belonged in Kentucky. Nevertheless, the Regular or later United Baptist Church, as the Pigeon group called themselves, received Thomas Lincoln's letter from the Kentucky Church, which we have reason to believe was the Little Mount Separate Baptist Church.

On the same day that Thomas Lincoln affiliated by letter Sister Lincoln and Thomas Carter were received by experience. On April 8, 1826, the church records state: "Door opened for reception of members" and the fourth entry bears this inscription: "Received Sister Sally Lincoln by experience of grace." This was undoubtedly Abraham Lincoln's sister, as a church record list shows the name of Sally Lincoln as a member of the church, and then the name Lincoln crossed

out and the name Grigsby written above the name indicating that it was this Sally Lincoln that married Aaron Grigsby. On the same list there also appears the name of Thomas Lincoln and Sally Lincoln, his wife.

One may wonder why Abraham Lincoln did not affiliate with the Church at this time, but it would have been strange if he had joined, and the supposition is that he would not have been invited to join. There were practically no young people on the book of the Pigeon Creek Church. It was a list of adults. Church membership was too serious an affair to be publicly embraced by those who had not settled down in life. The marriage register of Spencer County, and the old church record book, clearly indicated that matrimony was almost a requisite for church membership. Less than four months after Sarah Lincoln, Abraham's sister, affiliated with the Pigeon Church she married Aaron Grigsby. Although it is apparent that Lincoln had plenty of opportunities to marry when he was in Spencer County, if the folklore of the people can be relied upon, the fact that he didn't marry is probably responsible more than any other one thing for his non-affiliation with the church. In other words, it would have been strange, indeed, if he had united with the Pigeon Church.

Thomas Lincoln, the father, became a very prominent member of the Pigeon Church. He was one of its trustees, he was appointed to interview members of the church who had not observed proper discipline, he served as moderator at some of its meetings, and subscribed to funds necessary for repairing and improving the church building.

Just at the close of his residence in Indiana there seemed to be some disagreement between the Grigsbys and the Lincolns, which apparently first found expression at the time of the death of Sarah Lincoln Grigsby. The difficulty between the families was satisfactorily adjusted, however. On February 13 we find the last entry of Thomas Lincoln's name in the church record book when he was appointed on a committee of five, including, H. Gunterman, R. Oskins, D. Turnham, and J. Oskins to decide a matter of church discipline. This, it may be observed, was just a few days before the Lincolns started on their trip to Illinois showing that up to the very last of the Lincoln residence in Indiana Thomas was an active and influential member of the church.

Note: See Lincoln Lore No. 84 for Biographical sketches of ministers who served the church.





6  
Rockport, Indiana, June 24, 1943.

Dr. L.A. Warren,  
Lincoln Life Foundation,  
Ft. Wayne, Indiana.

My Dear Friend:-

Enclosed find a statement with reference to the purchase of the old Minute Book of Old Pidgeon Baptist Church that is located in the Nancy Hanks Lincoln Park at Lincoln City, Indiana.

Your experience with historical document and the documentary evidence substantiating them leads me to attempt to impose on your time by asking you the question, "Do you think the instrument, a copy of which I am enclosing will sufficiently support the fact that the book is the correct one now and in years to come?" My experience along this line is so limited that I am afraid to risk my judgment in the matter.

I do not want to pay a fancy price for a wonderful document and later have the genuineness of it questioned. I hope the book can be retained for future generations. If we have not sufficient evidence to maintain the fact that it is the book, it will have but little value.

If you think I should have further statements or proof, I shall appreciate any suggestions that you may offer.

Thanking you for any advice in the matter, I am

Your friend,

Hilbert Bennett.



not the original

July 2, 1943

Mr. Hilbert Bennett  
Rockport, Ind.

My dear Mr. Bennett:

I believe you are well satisfied with the documentary proof for the old Lincoln church book and I think it would be a fine thing indeed for you to acquire it and have it placed where it would be very permanently preserved, especially in some safe or place that is fireproof.

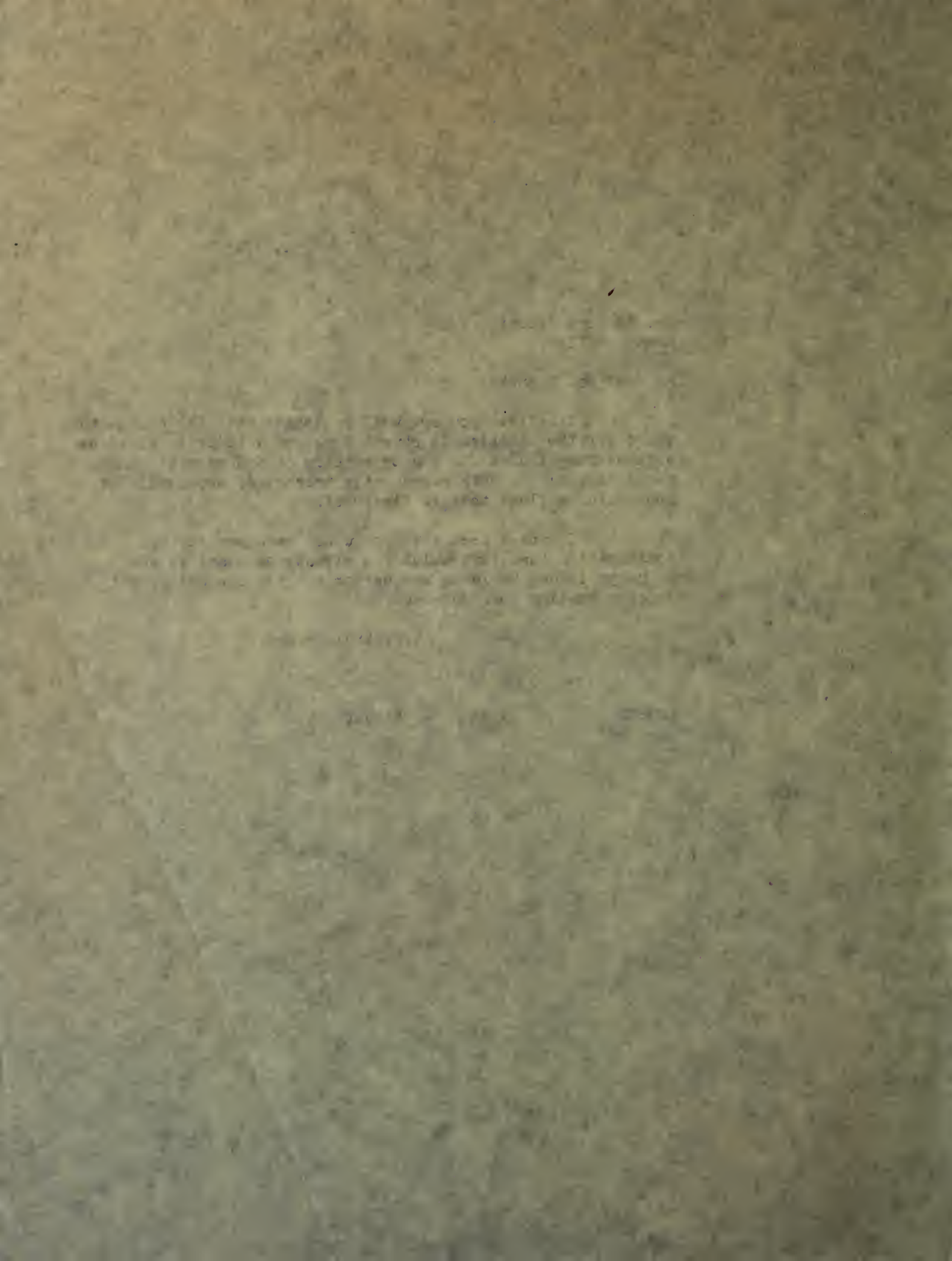
I cannot feel that you would need any further confirmation than that which you already have and we would be happy indeed to learn whether or not you are successful in consummating your purchase.

Very truly yours,

LAW:EB

Director





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# Spencer County Historical Society

DOWN IN THE LINCOLN COUNTRY OF INDIANA  
Grave of Nancy Hanks Lincoln, Spencer Co.

ROCKPORT, INDIANA

August 20, 1943.

Dr. Louis A. Warren,  
Ft. Wayne, Ind.,  
My Dear Dr. Warren:-

Some time ago I received a letter from you in answer to my inquiry relative to evidence to establish the genuineness of the old minute book of the Old Pidgeon Baptist Church near Lincoln City, Indiana. I hope that you will pardon me for neglecting to acknowledge the receipt of the information sought.

I want to thank you most heartily for your most valuable opinion on the matter.

I hardly have a minute of time to call my own, therefore I can give very little attention to matters in which I am interested aside from my daily duties.

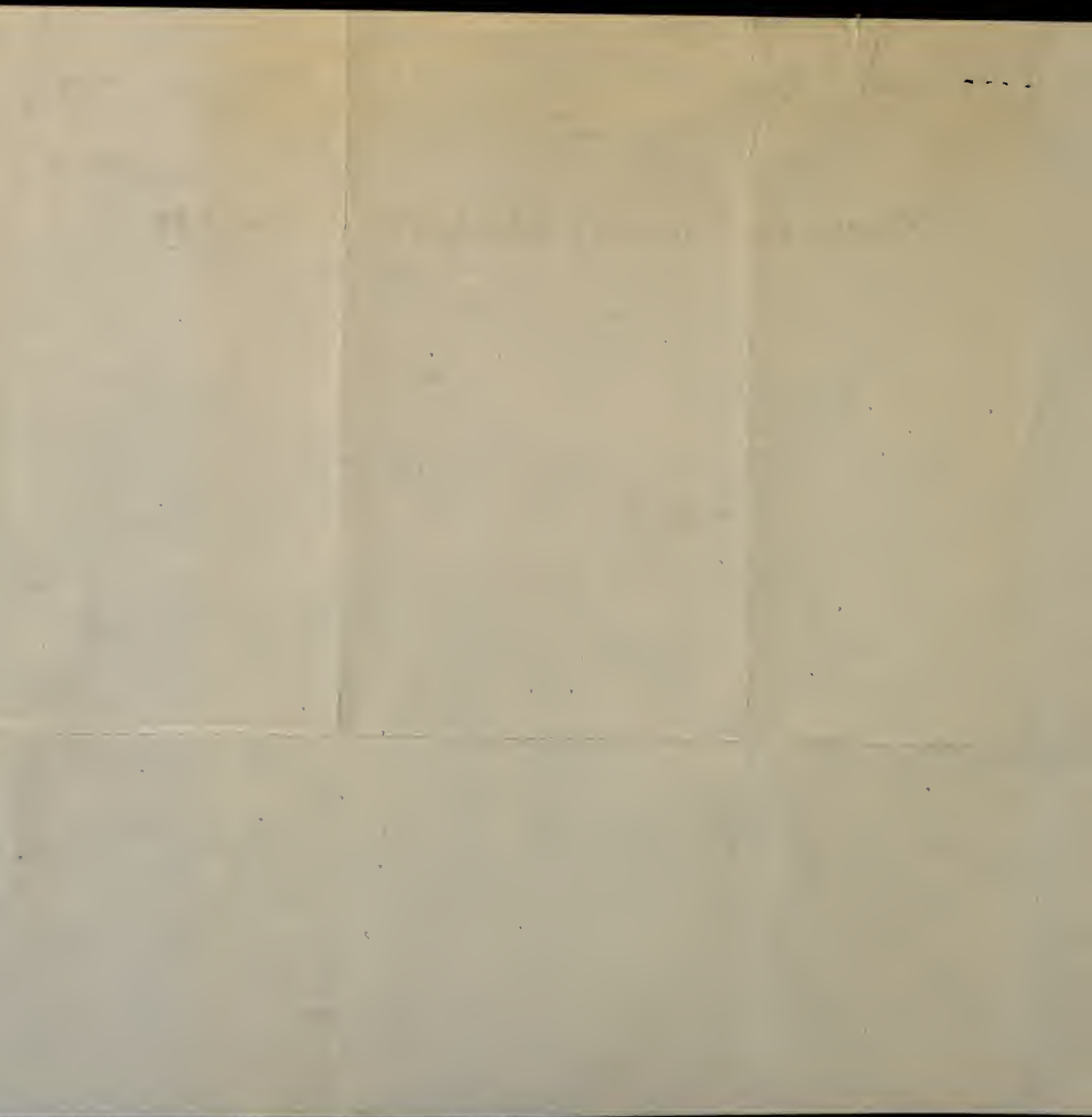
I bought the book for \$1000.00. I can not keep the book very long, because I am financially unable to hold such a valuable prize. The Spencer Historical Society would like to have the book. I bought it to hold it for them until such a time as they can determine that they can or can not buy it. If they can not buy it, I will then have to dispose of it. I am very doubtful if they will ever be able to buy it.

Enclosed find some photographs of the transactions. One was intended to show me handing the check to the trustees and receiving from one of them the book, but it is not a very good picture. You may keep the pictures.

Again thanking you for your valuable information, I am

Yours very truly,

*Hilbert Bennett*



August 24, 1943

Mr. Hilbert Bennett  
Spencer County Historical Society  
Rockport, Ind.

My dear Mr. Bennett:

May I thank you for your letter with respect to the acquisition of the valuable Old Pidgeon Baptist Church record book and we are happy to know that it is now preserved.

We are especially thankful for the pictures which give different phases of the transaction.

Very truly yours,

LAW:EB

Director



Page 10

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
LIBRARY

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
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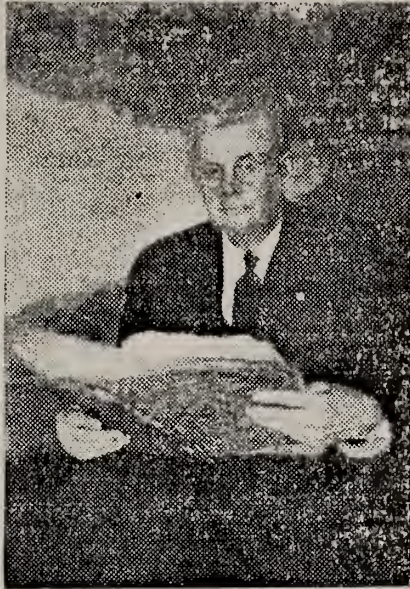
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LIBRARY

# Hilbert Bennett Pays \$1,000 For Old Church Record Book



HILBERT BENNETT  
Holding Old Church Record Book

(By Bess V. Ehrmann)

Historians and collectors of Lincoln books, letters, documents and manuscripts would have been interested in witnessing a recent transaction which occurred on June 22, 1943, down in the Lincoln country of Southern Indiana.

It was about four o'clock in the afternoon, when a small group of people assembled at the Old Pigeon Creek Baptist Church in Spencer County, where in 1819 a log building was erected by Owen R. Griffith and Thomas Lincoln, assisted by Lincoln's son, Abe, ten years of age.

Old Pigeon Church was organized in 1816 in Warrick County and in a short time was moved to its present location about a mile south of Lincoln City on ground donated by Noah Gorden and Samuel Howell.

This original log church has been gone for years, but in its place stands a quaint, little, white, frame church, in a setting of old trees, lush grass and winding paths which lead to the church and to the old burying ground behind it. It is like an old world setting of some long ago time.

On this June day when the men and women entered the church building there was a quiet and solemn attitude about them which expressed to an on-looker that something unusual was taking place.

Among the last to pass over the worn door-sill were two ministers, the taller and heavier of whom carried a small package in his hands. These men were Reverend W. A. Fleener, present pastor of the church, and the Reverend Thomas T. France, one time pastor and now a trustee of the historic old church.

Reverently the package carried by Reverend France was placed on the pulpit beside the worn Bible. Putting his hand upon it, he called the meeting to order and in a deep, rich voice he told his hearers that they were called together to give their consent to the sale of the sacred old minute book of their church; "a book", said he,

the church in the pioneer period; it also records the deaths, marriages, baptisms and numerous incidents where members had strayed from the straight and narrow path and were brought before the church officers for trial. The names of Thomas Lincoln, his second wife, Sarah Bush Lincoln, and Sarah Lincoln Grigsby, Abe Lincoln's sister, are recorded in the book in numerous places.

Reverend France explained how he had kept the sacred old book in his possession for seven years and had brought it back to them at their request, in order to sell it to secure money to repair the church. "The members of this church," he said, "are growing old and they wish to see their church home in good condition before they pass away." He stated that he was sorry to see the book go into other hands, but it was their privilege to do with it as they thought best.

The trustees of the church were called forward to place their names on a formal, legal document which sold the precious old volume to Mr. Hilbert Bennett of Rockport, Indiana, for one thousand dollars.

The afternoon shadows were lengthening when the assembled people passed out of the old church and paused for photographs to be taken of the church trustees and of Mr. Bennett receiving the book from Reverend France.

Before saying goodbye to neighbors and friends, the trustees and members took a farewell look at the old book in its deer-skin cover and the pages yellow with age but with writing clear, bold and legible.

Thus, the historical one hundred and twenty-seven year old book passed into other hands. We trust it may be placed in some museum where all interested persons may have the opportunity to look upon it.

Lincoln's great soul lived that each was correct, that the only difference between the two lads was one of viewpoint.

That Lincoln was not a nominal church member neither adds to nor detracts from either his goodness or his greatness. When judged by his life his religion surely was a good one.





# LINCOLN LORE

Bulletin of the Lincoln National Life Foundation - - - - - Dr. Louis A. Warren, Editor  
Published each week by The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Number 767

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

December 20, 1943

## A LOG MEETING HOUSE AND A DEERSKIN RECORD BOOK

Although the Christmas spirit is fundamentally religious, the social and economic emphasis has had a tendency to steal much of the human interest approach to this festive season. The sounding of a religious note in this issue of *Lincoln Lore* should appeal to the reader at Yule time. Notwithstanding the aspersions cast on the parents of Lincoln and the attempt to remove the growing boy from any worthy environment, the fact still stands, thoroughly documented, that Abraham Lincoln spent the formative years of his life under the influence of pious and active members of the church. His father and his own mother, his stepmother and his sister, were all closely associated with the organized religious bodies in the community where Abraham Lincoln was growing to manhood.

The recent acquisition in southern Indiana of an old log meeting house, and a church record book bound in deerskin, may serve as a sufficient incentive to call attention to the primitive religious surroundings which contributed to the forming of Abraham Lincoln's character.

By legislative enactment the Old Goshen Church situated in Harrison County, Indiana, twelve miles south of Corydon, the Indiana state capitol, has just become one of the state's memorials. The act of setting it aside provides for the maintenance of the church building under the direction of the State Conservation Commission.

While this church is not directly associated with the Lincolns, it is a typical pioneer church of the Lincoln period, and it closely resembles the church in which the Lincolns worshiped. Moses and Squire Boone, who were related to the Lincolns through marriages, between the Boones and Lincolns in Pennsylvania, deeded the two and one-half acres of land on which the church building stands, and also the graveyard, to the trustees of the church. This church was also in the same county where Thomas Lincoln's brother, Josiah, lived. He was likely an occasional attendant at the church.

The church in the wildwood that Abraham Lincoln remembered, and, which he attended with the other members of the family for a decade, was known as "The Little Pigeon Church," located in Spencer County, Indiana. It was here that the pioneers sang their Christmas carols and it is also in the graveyard of this church that Abraham's sister lies buried, and not far away in an earlier community cemetery lies the body of his mother.

A record book of this old Pigeon Church, carrying on the roll the names of Thomas Lincoln, Sarah Bush Lincoln and Sarah Lincoln Grigsby, has recently changed hands and now passes from the trustees of the church to Hilbert Bennett, a member of the Spencer County Historical Society. This change of possession should assure the permanent preservation of the old book, which is probably the most valuable record book relating to the Indiana history of the Lincoln family.

The doctrines of what was called the Hard-Shell Baptist Church were clearly set forth in the front of the record book, and they must have been very familiar to Lincoln and definitely influenced his religious thoughts, some positively and others negatively.

Possibly the church ordinance that made the deepest impression on Abraham Lincoln was the primitive service of foot washing. An order on the record book for May 8 1819, states:

"The church agrees to designate or set apart one of their communion seasons to be administered in the evening after which they proceed to washing of feet." This comment comes from one who observed the practice of

this primitive ordinance. "It is a beautiful service—the brethren together washing one another's feet, and the sisters to themselves likewise engaged. Those who are able to speak from experience testify to the spiritual helpfulness." Is it not likely that this humblest of all ordinances observed by the church may have left a lasting impression on the plastic mind of a boy who became one of the humblest men who ever lived?

It is difficult to find a more important source book in attempting to account for some of the early contributions to Lincoln's religious and moral precepts, than the old record book bound in deer hide, in which the doctrines of the religious body are clearly set forth. However, a book of more mercenary value, connected with the old church, may some day come to light.

A little known Lincoln story appeared in a letter printed in the *Kansas City Journal*, for January 22, 1909, contributed by Caleb A. Obenshain, pastor of the Memorial Baptist Church, at Dewey, Oklahoma. This is Rev. Obenshain's story:

"I have knowledge of an incident which I have never seen in print. In the year 1866, while a teacher in Rockport Academy, in the southern part of Indiana, I was invited by the Methodist presiding elder, the Rev. J. J. Stallard, of the Rockport district, Indiana Conference, to attend and assist him in conducting a quarterly meeting to be held in Gentryville, Indiana. The meeting was near where Mr. Lincoln's mother lies buried. We visited the grave of Mr. Lincoln's mother and were taken to the cabin where the Lincoln family had lived. We then visited an old log church standing probably a quarter of a mile distance from either the cabin or the grave, an old log Baptist church, not then in use, but where my guide told me the Lincoln family had formerly worshipped.

"While in the old church I climbed up into the loft to familiarize myself with the building and discovered in a crevice between two of the upper logs an old faded memorandum book that had been used in other years. Opening it and scanning its contents I found this entry, where the church was charged 'Dr. To. 1 broom, ½ doz. tallow candles,' and signed, 'Abe Lincoln, Sexton.' To me it was an interesting discovery, but I did not then realize the value of that little entry in Lincoln's own handwriting, as I have realized it since. So after noting it carefully, I placed the book, yellow with age, back in the crevice where I had found it."

More important, however, than the doctrines of the church, spread in the old record book, or the messages of the ministers, was the Christian example of Lincoln's own father. Everyone who knew him has spoken kindly of him and only those who had no personal acquaintance with him have condemned him. He served in many capacities in the Pigeon Creek Church as the records reveal. He was appointed a trustee of the church, was on its original building committee, moderator at the church meetings, selected to interview members about discipline, etc. There is sufficient evidence in the old record book to prove conclusively that he was an earnest and faithful member of the congregation during all the years that Abraham Lincoln was approaching maturity.

One who often sat at the table in the Lincoln cabin home in Indiana has testified that Thomas Lincoln habitually asked grace at meal time, and these were the words he always used, "Fit and prepare us for life's humblest service, for Christ's sake, Amen." The child Lincoln was not unfamiliar with the Bethlehem story, nor deprived of the spiritual atmosphere accentuated with each succeeding Christmas.





**TODAY'S  
PRESCRIPTION  
IS THE BIGGEST  
BARGAIN IN  
HISTORY**

## HE CARRIES 5,000 DRUGS... NOT 200

In most retail fields, the typical store carries only enough varieties of goods to satisfy most customers, most of the time. A pharmacy could do the same—by carrying only about 200 different prescription drugs. But today's pharmacist stocks more than 5,000 drugs, even the most obscure, so as to have on hand exactly what the doctor prescribes—for any customer, at any time. It costs the pharmacist a lot of money to maintain such a stock. But you pay only what your prescription is worth. That's why we say...



**TODAY'S PRESCRIPTION IS THE BIGGEST BARGAIN IN HISTORY**

# WOODS <sup>Rexall</sup> DRUGS

more ways than one, when you think about it.

Dean Thompson, who also is in charge of the E. C. Job Placement Bureau, said industry begins getting "dates" for senior interviews by the time freshman beanies are issued in the fall.

Within a month or two, a college the size of Evansville College is booked solid, through April 1. By then, the way things have gone over the past couple of years, they have to cut off all interviews.

All the graduating seniors are "taken" by then.

Dean Thompson says that literally every senior gets his job through the placement bureau these days, locally at least. Instead of gripping his diploma in a hot fist and setting out to pound a hot pavement—the quaint old custom of Dean Thompson's day—seniors today accept a date at the Student Union Building with a professional college recruiter from industry who has been carefully trained in the business world's newest grey flannel suit specialty: wooing graduates into the fold.

Last year there were 100 large companies on the local campus with their recruiters.

There are fat "occupational directories" issued to students such as the "College Placement Annual," which catalogs and describes hundreds of the nation's leading firms, and carries articles such as "What to Look For in an Interview."

That means in blunt terms "how to get the best deal," Dean Thompson says.

This thing, "this clamor for graduates," the dean says has developed over just the past eight years: "Since I came to Evansville College in 1954, coincidentally," he says. That year he sent out 100 letters, inviting in-

same thing just last year.

"It will mean some companies coming back year after year and never getting a student. The way it is now, almost all the companies occasionally get at least one," says the dean.

"I really don't know where this thing is going, because the companies are beginning to ask for multiple interviews—two or more a year. They want to come back in the spring when everyone's taken and begin interviewing the juniors."

The upshot is, then, that the initiative of job hunting now is with the companies. And Dean Thompson says it's a desirable development.

For the system today is more likely to get the right man on the right job. It gives the student a broader prospectus of "where he can fit into the big picture" than Dean Thompson had, he says, and allows the prospective employer a more accurate picture of the student.

For industry has decided it can tell more about the senior in his "home situation"—on campus, that is—than in the company's personnel office in some distant city.

Students are more sophisticated about these interviews than at first, the dean has observed. He no longer has to subtly advise them how to dress or behave.

There is an average of two companies holding an interview date in the E. C. Student Union building—every day! Peak of the season is January-March. After that, almost everyone invariably is signed up.

Once in a while this goes to a student's head, Dean Thompson admits. He catches a senior in the happy dilemma of a girl with five proposals and, he fears, finds him occasionally "flirting," dangling all five





# Where Lincoln Walked to Church

## Young Abe's Father Helped Build Original Little Pigeon Church

By GEORGE McCORMACK

In 1818, just two years after the Lincoln family came to Southern Indiana, Nancy Hanks Lincoln died. Her death, like that of several others in the Spencer County community, was caused by milk fever. No one knew then that the illness was caused by white snakeroot, a poisonous plant that killed cattle that ate it and poisoned those who drank their milk.

Her husband Tom Lincoln, assisted by a nephew, Dennis Hanks, fashioned a coffin of rough boards which were held together by wooden pegs which young Abraham Lincoln whitened to fit the gimlet holes. There was no minister to comfort the family as Nancy Hanks Lincoln was laid to rest on a wooded knoll a short distance from the Lincoln cabin.

The following year an itinerant preacher, David Elkins, who had known the Lincolns when they lived on Knob Creek in Kentucky, came to Spencer County, and he preached a belated funeral over the grave of Nancy Hanks Lincoln and others who had died without church services.

The same year, 1819, the Primitive Baptists built a church about one mile south of the Lincoln cabin. Tom Lincoln helped build the log church which measured 26 feet by 30 feet, a large structure for pioneers to build of logs. He made the door and window frames, the doors and the pulpit. He also made, entirely of wood, the molds used by David Turham to make bricks for the chimney.

Tom Lincoln joined the church he had helped to build.

On June 7, 1822, William Barker, recording secretary of Little Pigeon Creek Baptist Church, made this entry: "Received Brother Thomas Lincoln, by letter."

In Kentucky, Tom Lincoln had belonged to the Rolling Fork Baptist Association, a branch of the Baptist Church that opposed slavery, and his letter came from them.

From the day Tom Lincoln joined Little Pigeon Church, church going became a regular part of Abraham Lincoln's life, and — while he attended the church — there is no record that he ever joined it. The Baptists insisted on attendance at church services and they disciplined those who were absent without cause.

Church records reveal that Tom Lincoln served the church as moderator, arbiter of disputes and as messenger. Poor as he was, he contributed to the support of the church, once donating 24 pounds of meal.

The Lincoln cabin became a stop-

ping place for preachers who, in that day, "stood for the good old two-seed, hard shell, anti-missionary, predestination gospel; and he was not considered much of a preacher who could not make himself heard for a mile."

Church-going offered a welcome opportunity for people of a pioneer community to get together. They came to Little Pigeon Church from as far as ten miles. Some came on horseback, others walked, carrying their shoes until they reached the church. Before services opened there was a round of handshaking, eating and swapping news. Then, according to one who attended Little Pigeon Creek Church in Lincoln's day, "The preacher took his stand, drew his coat, opened his shirt collar and began services with singing and prayer. Then he announced his text and preached until great drops of sweat coursed down his face. Then there was more singing and prayer to close the meeting."

Bibles were expensive then, but there was a Bible in the Lincoln cabin. Whether it belonged to Tom Lincoln or to his second wife, Sarah Bush Lincoln, is not clear. Just how extensively young Abe Lincoln read the Bible is disputed; but his love for reading anything he could get his hands on and the scarcity of books in the community would lead one to believe that he read the Bible thoroughly.

Better evidence is his choice of words in his fine writings, and many students compare Lincoln's "Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation," with the first sentence in Genesis: "In the beginning the Lord created the heavens and the earth," as evidence that Lincoln's choice of words was influenced by the Bible.

There is evidence that Lincoln paid close attention to the sermons and mannerisms of the pioneer preachers, for contemporaries often told that he could repeat entire sermons almost verbatim, complete with the peculiarities of speech and gesture of the preachers he imitated.

Little Pigeon Creek Baptist Church has been rebuilt, almost upon the foundation of the original church.

It stands in a clearing in the woods and is surrounded by a church yard where are buried Sarah Lincoln Grigsby, Abraham Lincoln's sister, and many others whose names are familiar to all who read the story of Lincoln's life in Southern Indiana.



THE PRESENT Little Pigeon Creek Primitive Baptist Church, built almost on the foundation of the original structure which Tom Lincoln helped build. This is about one mile south of the Lincoln cabin in Spencer County. Tom Lincoln made door and window frames, the doors and the pulpit.



SARAH LINCOLN GRIGSBY, sister of Abraham Lincoln, is buried near the Little Pigeon church. The marker of her grave is new and stands beside that of her husband which shows the weathering of 130 years. The little graveyard is dotted with markers for those who settled the community 150 years ago and figured in Lincoln's youth.





**WARREN A. REEDER**

HOMES - VACANT LAND - SUBDIVISIONS  
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Our 33rd Year

*file in Religion:  
Heder Indiana:  
Pigeon Creek Church  
Record Book*  
**Realtor**

260 - 165TH STREET - HAMMOND, INDIANA 46324  
Phone WEstmore 2-0400

February 15, 1974

Lincoln Museum  
Lincoln National Life Insurance Co.  
Fort Wayne, IN 46800

Dear Sirs:

A gentleman came in the library recently and left the within, stating that he had gotten the Xerox copies from an old lady who had the original.

Is this a well-known matter or does this woman have something and is it new? Thomas Lincoln and Sally Lincoln are mentioned on page 10.

I thought perhaps you might know. The librarian did not think to get the woman's name and address, but it can no doubt be procured.

Yours truly,

*Warren A. Reeder, Jr.*

Warren A. Reeder, Jr., REALTOR  
President, Hammond Public Library

WAR:js

Enclosure



Exceipts. from  
Church Records of  
Pidgeon Creek, Ind  
Thomas Linnalms  
listed as member,



**Csulák, Mihály.**

**Mindenütt vannak csillagok; regény. Budapest, Móra  
Ferenc Könyvkiadó, 1970.**

**197 p. illus. 21 cm. 14.00Ft**

**I. Title.**

**PH3213.C8164M5**

**79-295950**

**Library of Congress**

**71 (2)**

## Require Baptists

This is a copy of the deer-  
skin book record book from  
1816 to 1840 which was sold to  
Gilbert Bennett June 22 1913.

Saturday June 8 1816 the Baptist  
church of Jesus Christ known  
by the name of Pigeon Creek  
Warren County Indiana Territory  
was constituted by Brothers  
John Nelson & Thomas Owens a  
presiding elder for that purpose  
whose names numbers &  
articles of faith and Government  
are as follows. First the church  
chose Thomas Owens clerk for  
the meeting invited Brethren of  
sister churches to a seat  
with us. names of brothers





That came to the bounds of  
the constitution first the article  
of faith read and received by  
the community letters handed in  
by Brothers & sisters

- 1) Father Rogers 1. John Harrison 2  
Samuel Bristol 3  
John Tennessee 4. Emuck Varison  
5. Wm Lamare 6. Nelly Rogers 7.  
Liner Allen 8. Jamieson Hays 9.  
Savina Bristol 10. Sarah  
Pavel 11. Patsy Garrison 12.  
Lussey Lamare 13.

We believe  
in one God the Father the  
word & the holy spirit who  
created all things that are created  
in the world & who are  
pleasure. We believe the  
new testament are a word of  
God. There are many things that  
there are no people for  
the world & the people  
of the world.

The people of the world  
are the people of the world  
between the 1st & 2nd  
of the world.  
Subscribers names:  
Henry Goderman, 120



Wentham to B. H. C. and B. H. W.  
Tennessee to G. H. C. - I had the  
church take up the report, and

Wentham to Gutter Creek Church in  
Harden County. Bro. A. J. G. by  
bore the letter to Gutter Creek  
Church in Harden County who are  
Brother Charles Howell Belmont.

Done by order of the church  
Reuben Grigsby of the church  
C. I. K. February the 7th 1818

The church agrees to send to  
Sister churches for help to  
decide on the so Controversy  
between so Brother Charles  
Howell and Bro Samuel Buxton  
7th Bro Lewis to the Ohio Church  
Bro Tenneson to Panties Church,  
Bro Rogers to Bethel Church.

Done by order of the church  
Reuben Grigsby, C. I. K.,  
The church chose a committee  
to decide on the said  
controversy betwixt Bro Chas  
Howell and Samuel Buxton  
Wentham the 7. 1818





15  
The Convention appointed  
to inquire into the  
conduct of Bro. Charles  
Howell and Bro. Samuel  
Dunston. And after due  
consideration, they Bro. Dunston  
clear of having  
any hand in taking away  
the water lost. Bro. Charles  
Howell and on his acknowledged  
guilt we acquit him of  
the charge. The Church  
chose Bro. Leman to be  
a standing moderator for  
this Church. The Church appointed  
- Church Agents Bro. Dunston  
to prepare to be active for  
inspection for tomorrow.

January the 9th 1819.

16  
The Church met according to  
appointment. And after prayer  
the Convention proceeded to



a letter to the session from the church appoints Br Samuel Bristow for spring term. Received a letter from the Polk Polk Church craving our ministerial help to meet them at Bakers Creek Church.

(April the 10<sup>th</sup> 1819)  
 Chas. Bur. Allenworth moderator. The church agrees to designate or set apart one of their Communion seasons to be administered in the evening after which they proceed to washing of feet. The church taking under consideration the case of Jeremiah Allen, John Harrison & Peter Harrison. And say that the aforesaid persons is no more members with us.

The church adopts a rule that any member failing to attend Church meeting shall lose their Name at the next Church meeting.





to prepare for  
inspection of the same.

January the 9<sup>th</sup> 1819.

16.

The Church met according to  
appointment. And after prayer  
proceeded to business.

Received Sister Edgema White  
by letter. The Church chose Bro's  
Lev. Lemaire for their Pastor  
The Church agrees to build a  
meeting house, the Church  
appoints five Brethren to wit  
Bro Lemaire, Bro Gigsby Bro  
Gentry Bro Kandle Bro  
Christine & Bro Sally, to look  
out the most suitable place  
for a meeting house and make  
report at next meeting, our  
next meeting will be held  
at B Gigsby's. Done by order  
of the Church. Attestors C. L. K.  
and A. L. K. for the  
Church with Bro Kandle as clerk



the church taking notice  
and at the time of  
January 20th. Mr. Harrison  
Perry Harrison and wife  
the afford persons is no  
members with us.

The church adopts a rule  
that any member failing to  
attend church meeting  
shall give their Reason at  
the next church meeting

Feb 12<sup>th</sup> 1820

The Reference from our last  
meeting concerning the  
meeting house to be built, and  
attended to in order and the  
church say that they will  
build three walls of three logs  
in the following order to wit  
the width one story and six  
in it the size 24 feet wide  
by 32 feet long with  
a door in each end and  
a window in each end three  
logs and five windows and  
fenced with the doors  
and meet meeting to be at  
the old place, Thursday February





March 12 1820.

61

The church receives a request from a body of Baptist living on the Harrisburg-Fork of Anderson River requesting the Pequot Church to attend them and set in church order with them in Council, our next meeting will be held at Bro Goddard -.

There is a report in circulation concerning Bro S. Stacy and sister Stacy, report say that the Sister has been just married and is waiting and the Bro is standing by and allowing it, therefore the church taking the case to appoint Bro to wit James Gentry and Stephen Sally to sit there to attend our next meeting and



check not showing  
any violation of  
the law on all points  
after patient investigation  
in the above case on motion the  
referees agree that charge is  
paid therefore the  
agreed to. T. Lincoln - Had -  
the same as the

H. Lincoln - Had -  
the same as the

June 25<sup>th</sup> 1825, in the town of  
our town a list of names that  
compose Little Pioner church.  
1 Young Lemare - Pastor 2 Charles -  
Harper - A preacher 3 William Lemare  
Deacon - Dismissed (Oct 12<sup>th</sup> 1823) 4 Virginia -  
Stark - Right wing clk. 5 Thomas Jeffries  
- Singing clk. Deaconist - 6 Sarah  
Portell. 7 Lisa Lemare - Dismissed  
by vote (Oct 12, 1823) 8. Rebecca Jeffries  
9. Nancy Gregory. 10. Stephen Sally  
11. Mary Sally - 12 Nancy Grant.





13 James Sally dismissed by letter  
 14 Mary Sally - dismissed by letter  
 15 Mary Stark - 16 Melinda Askins  
 17 Joseph Askins 18 Nancy Askins  
 19 Jacob Askins. 20 Nancy Richardson  
 21 Henry Gonterman. 22 Barbey -  
 Gonterman - 23 John Carter dismissed  
 by letter Oct 12 1823 - 24 Noah Judan  
 25 Nancy Judan 26 Eve Turham  
 27 James Gentry 28 Dalton Gentry  
 29 Polly Jefferies - Dismissed  
 30 Sarah Whittinghill. 31 John Kelly  
 32 Sarah Kelly 33 John Vine Excluded  
 34 Thomas Linkhorn - 35 Sally Linkhorn  
 36 Thomas Carter dismissed by letter  
1824 - 37 Elias Garret. Dismissed by  
 letter June 12, 1824. - 38 Hester Libanus  
 39 Betsey Garret. Dis. By letter  
 40 Philip Harper. Encommunicated

42 Owen Griffith. Excommunicated  
 43 Margaret Stark - 44 Edith White <sup>Oct 12 1823</sup>  
 45 Elizabeth White. Dis. by letter  
 46 Mershael Stacy. Dis. by letter  
 47 Shailst Stacy. Dis. by letter  
 48 Polly Meeker. Dis. by letter Oct 12 1823





The house to be of size &  
form as follows - 30 By 26.  
Lugged logs 8 feet in the  
inner story and 6 feet  
above the joint shingles  
the said trustees to  
attend to the walls & Roof of  
said house with & solicited  
subscriptions, raise property  
and employ workmen to  
perform said work

June the 7<sup>th</sup> 1823

The church met and after  
prayer proceeded to business  
13<sup>th</sup> - Inquired for fellowship  
inviting members of sister  
churches to a seat with us.  
open a door for the  
reception of members.  
Rev. Brother Thomas  
Serikho. by letter Page 2





Ordered that the sales of this  
church be made this day

page  
(6) work 300  
Wm. Brown corn 95 bush  
Thomas Smith corn 24 lbs  
James Hodge cotton 25 " " and  
Wm. Barber boarding work hauls 800 and  
John Gore work 5 days  
Misses Lemare pork 150 lbs  
Joseph Miller pork 100 lbs  
Wm. Perkins pork 200 lbs  
Wm. Whittenhill Bacon 24 " "  
David Trenchard Buck work 800  
Josiah West 900

Feb 20<sup>th</sup> 1830

At the undersigned reference  
being convened at the meeting  
house on the 20<sup>th</sup> of February  
1830 in order to settle a  
diff. and to determine Sister  
Christy and sister Crapp  
that those viz Thomas Lincoln  
and Bro. Wm. Brown

March 12 1820

[6]

The church reserves a  
request from a body of Baptist  
living on the Haverhill



*File in Religion  
Folder: Indiana:  
Pigeon Creek Church  
Record Book*

February 21, 1974

Mr. Warren A. Reeder  
President, Hammond Public Library  
260 165th Street  
Hammond, Indiana 46324

Dear Mr. Reeder:

May I extend our personal thanks to you for the Xerox copies of the deerskin record book of the Pigeon Creek Baptist Church you enclosed with your letter of February 15, 1974. I find your letter very interesting.

This is a well known matter that a record book of Pigeon Creek Church carried on its role the names of Thomas Lincoln, Sarah Bush Lincoln and Sally Lincoln Grigsby (daughter of Thomas Lincoln). This record book was sold to Hilbert Bennett on June 22, 1943. I enclose Lincoln Lore bulletins numbers 661 and 767 on the subject.

It would indeed be very nice to know the location of this original record book for our files. If you can procure the name and address of this older lady that has the original, it would be quite helpful to us. Perhaps we could obtain some interesting historical data on the document she has and how she acquired it for our records.

Thank you again for informing us on this matter. Efforts such as yours enable us to extend our history data relating to the life and times of Abraham Lincoln.

Sincerely yours,

(Mrs.) Mary Jane Hubler  
Assistant to Dr. Neely

MJH/jn

Enc:





# HAMMOND PUBLIC LIBRARY

564 STATE STREET

PHONE 931-5100

HAMMOND, INDIANA 46320



A WORLD  
OF  
INFORMATION

EDWARD B. HAYWARD, Librarian

March 16, 1974

Mrs. Mary Jane Hubler, Assistant to Dr. Neely  
Lincoln National Life Foundation  
Fort Wayne, Indiana 46802

Dear Mrs. Hubler:

Since I supplied Warren Reeder with the copies of the deerskin record book of the Pigeon Creek Baptist Church, he forwarded your letter of Feb. 21, 1974 to me to supply the name of the woman who was our source of these copies.

A patron of the library brought these copies in to us. I understood him to say he had copied them from her original, but upon persuing the source with him, I must correct my statement. He copied them from her copy! As far as she knows, the original is still in the possession of Hilbert Bennett, purchased at auction many years ago for \$1000. This woman's name and address is:

Christine Young  
Route 3  
Rock Bottom Farm  
Rockport, Indiana 47635

Sincerely yours,

Marjorie Sohl  
Head of Adult Services



File in Religion Drawer under  
Folder: Indiana  
Pigeon Creek Church  
Record Book

March 19, 1974

Ms. Marjorie Sohl  
Head of Adult Services  
Hammond Public Library  
564 State Street  
Hammond, Indiana 46320

Dear Ms. Sohl:

Thank you so much for your letter of March 16, 1974 in which you forwarded the name of the woman that has copies of the deerskin record book of the Pigeon Creek Baptist Church.

We appreciate your assistance very much and Dr. Neely, our director, is planning to correspond with Christine Young.

If we can ever be of any assistance to you, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely yours,

(Mrs.) Mary Jane Hubler  
Assistant to Dr. Neely

MJH/jn





# Historic Churches in America

## LINCOLN'S CHURCH AT PIGEON CREEK, INDIANA

Text and Drawing by Frederick Polley

In the fall of 1816 Thomas Lincoln, with his wife Nancy, his daughter Sarah and young son Abraham, came to Indiana. After a short visit at Troy, on the Ohio river near the mouth of Anderson creek where Abe later on was to run a ferry boat, the little family made their way to the site of their future home on Little Pigeon creek, cutting a passage through the tangled wilderness in what was then known as Hurricane township, Perry county, Indiana...Perry county was the fourth county in the Territory of Indiana, and was the last county to be created before the Territory applied to Congress for an enabling act. Troy was the first county seat, Spencer county was organized in 1818, and its boundaries include the settlement of Little Pigeon Creek where the Lincolns lived.

The Lincoln family entered the Indiana country in the autumn season when the hills are dressed in their gayest colors. These returning fall pageants of bewitching hues was annually witnessed by the boy Abraham from the tender age of seven until his twenty-first year. These are the years of memory-storing. Abe Lincoln never forgot.

It was not long after the arrival of the Lincolns at the Perry county settlement until the Pigeon Baptist church was organized and Thomas Lincoln became a member on June 7th, 1823. He was soon made a trustee and often served as moderator. He was a skilled carpenter and when the church was built he fashioned the door and window frames and made the pulpit. Young Abe assisted in this work. This building was, no doubt, made of logs and stood about a mile south of the Lincoln home. The drawing above was made from the cemetery yard and shows the little frame church which was erected on the site of the original log building.



Frederick Polley  
CENTREVILLE  
INDIANA

ABRAHAM LINCOLN AT PIGEON CREEK





## *Lincoln's Mimicry of Pulpiteers.*

At an early age he began to attend the "preachings" roundabout, but principally at the Pigeon Creek church, with a view to catching whatever might be ludicrous in the preacher's air or matter, and making it the subject of mimicry as soon as he could collect an audience of idle boys and men to hear him. A pious stranger, passing that way on a Sunday morning, was invited to preach for the Pigeon Creek congregation; but he banged the boards of the old pulpit

and bellowed and groaned so wonderfully that Abe could hardly contain his mirth.

This memorable sermon was a great favorite with him; and he frequently reproduced it with nasal tones, rolling eyes, and all manner of droll aggravations, to the great delight of Nat Grigsby and the wild fellows whom Nat was able to assemble. None that heard him, not even Nat himself (who was anything but dull) was ever able to show wherein Abe's absurd version really departed from the original.

LN-CENTENARY-ET

Chas. Lincoln







